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PROTESTERS FLOAT “ENBRIDGE OCTOPUS” OUTSIDE WALKER’S WINDOW TO DELIVER CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

(MADISON) Concerned landowners and citizens demonstrated today outside Gov. Walker’s office in Madison to protest a Republican scheme to pay off the Enbridge pipeline company in the state budget bill. The 11th hour anonymous amendment pushed by Enbridge’s lobbyists bans local governments from requiring the company, which has become notorious for causing catastrophic oil spills, to purchase clean up insurance so that taxpayers won’t be left holding the bag.

The group positioned a float in the shape of an Enbridge octopus next to the Governor’s East Wing office which dropped into his window thousands of dollars in monopoly money to represent the campaign contributions it expects the Governor and Republican legislators to receive for doing the company’s bidding.

Frustrated with the political process she sees as corrupt, Jefferson County landowner Ronni Monroe said “Since the politicians are so intent on getting campaign contributions, regardless of the harm it does to the state’s taxpayers and landowners along the line, we thought we’d help speed up getting the pipeline company’s contributions to the Governor.”

“Enbridge is a \$42 billion Canadian pipeline company that exploits loopholes to avoid paying federal and state income taxes. It hired four high paid lobbyists to push through what is likely to turn into a \$1 billion taxpayer bailout for itself at Wisconsin’s expense as part of the 2015 state budget,” said Carl Whiting with 350-Madison.

Enbridge’s pipeline crosses Wisconsin from Superior to the Wisconsin border and into Illinois. “It is all risk and no gain for the state,” said Elizabeth Ward from the Sierra Club. The company has such a terrible safety record it caused the worst inland oil spill in US history costing more than one billion dollars, which led regulators to describe them as “keystone kops” with no safety culture.

Mary Beth Elliot from 350-Madison said, “To protect its citizens from this corporate miscreant, Dane County had required Enbridge to carry environmental cleanup insurance.”

To pay back Enbridge’s undue influence in the Republican-controlled legislature, under the cover of darkness late at night without notice or hearing, the Republican budget barred localities from requiring Enbridge to any longer carry the kind of insurance needed to guarantee that next big spill is cleaned up. “That leaves the state’s taxpayer to pay for the clean up in the future when all fossil fuel companies and their funds for cleanups will be financially weakened as the world warms and must transition away from carbon-based fuels to renewables,” concluded Elliot.