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## Editorial: Baldwin's green battle

**An editorial**  
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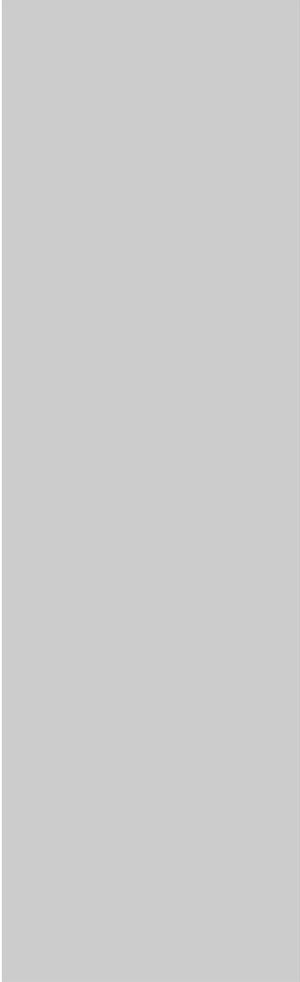
With the Bush administration launching so many assaults on the economic, social and environmental protections that Americans rely on, it is easy to lose track of all the battles. And it is easy to forget that, even in the losing battles, there are sometimes heroes.

But no one should lose sight of the fight that U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, put up against the House Judiciary Committee this week.

Republicans who control the committee were pushing President Bush's Healthy Forests Restoration Act, a deceptively named piece of legislation that was promoted as a powerful new weapon to fight forest fires.

In fact, as Sierra Club national forest policy specialist Sean Cosgrove says, "the bill doesn't do anything to really protect communities from forest fires."

What the bill really does is limit public participation in decision-making with regard to public lands and make it harder for citizens to bring legal actions when they are concerned that the federal government has made bad decisions regarding those lands.



Baldwin offered four amendments designed to retain the rights of citizens to be part of the process. Each of those amendments was blocked by the Republican majority, including committee Chair James Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls.

Baldwin will offer her amendments again when the bill comes to the House floor. She may get beat again there. But by challenging the administration's transparent attempts to push the people out of the process and by offering amendments that provide a road map for setting things right, she is giving more responsible players in the Senate - and perhaps the courts - tools they can use to right the wrongs.

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