

Rep. Shankland: Introduces Bills in Celebration of Earth Day

Posted on Monday, Apr 24, 2017

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MADISON - In celebration of Earth Day, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) is introducing two bills in support of Wisconsin's natural resources. The first bill would require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to publish information about climate change on the DNR website and in the Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine, and the second would reinstate scientist research positions that were cut in the 2015-2017 biennial budget.

"As we celebrate Earth Day, we must do more to protect our natural resources and ensure their sustainability for generations to come," said Rep. Shankland. "Climate change is one of the largest threats our planet is facing, and the state should honor its commitment to our environment and the people who enjoy it by taking action on climate change."

An essay recently published by a group of scientists stated that the edits to the DNR website "incorrectly implied climate change is mysterious when it's clearly caused by greenhouse gases produced by burning fossil fuels," as reported by the Wisconsin State Journal. LRB-2188 requires the DNR to publish information on the DNR's website and in the Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine relating to the scientific consensus that climate change is caused by human activity and is a threat to economic and global security.

Additionally, dozens of DNR employees received layoff notices two years ago on Earth Day following harsh position cuts in the 2015-17 budget. These scientists conducted vital research and helped ensure that the DNR's natural resource management decisions were based on science, not politics. LRB-3132 would allocate \$1,861,200 to the DNR to restore the 18.4 full-time scientist research positions that were cut in the previous biennial budget.

“Instead of spending money on short-term fixes, we should be investing in research that prevents environmental harm from occurring in the first place,” continued Rep. Shankland. “I’m pleased to introduce these common-sense measures to promote increased public awareness, research, and response to the issues facing our state’s shared natural resources.”