

Rep. Tusler: Continues legacy protecting state parks

Posted on Wednesday, Nov 1, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Contact: Representative Ron Tusler (608) 266-5831

Bill Addresses Critical Health and Safety Maintenance Needs in State Parks

Madison, WI – Today, Representative Ron Tusler (R – Harrison) and Senator Robert Cowles (R – Green Bay) testified on Assembly Bill 537, the Parks Revitalization Act. The bill appropriates up to \$4.5 million towards repairs for “critical health and safety-related water infrastructure projects” within the state parks system, including new toilet and septic systems. Rep. Tusler’s testimony comes days before he receives the “Legislator of the Year” award from Friends of Wisconsin State Parks.

“It is important that we address these critical needs now before the aging infrastructure affects the public health and scares away people from utilizing our state parks,” said Rep. Tusler. “Wisconsin is known for our beautiful scenery and outstanding parks system—we need to keep it that way.”

In a study conducted for the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, Wisconsin’s state parks are a strong selling point for tourists. Wisconsin received its highest “image” ratings for our “outdoor assets,” including clear water for recreation, and “excellent state parks.”

Much of Wisconsin’s state parks’ infrastructure was built between the 1930s and 1970s. Over 17 million people visited the Wisconsin State Park System in 2016, a 21 percent increase from a decade prior. The high attendance numbers have put a strain on the infrastructure, necessitating repairs. The Parks Revitalization Act would prioritize projects in the states most-visited state parks, including High Cliff State Park in Calumet County.

Rep. Tusler's great-grandfather, State Senator Gordon Bubolz, set aside land for High Cliff State Park and Center Swamp, later renamed the Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve, when he served in the State Senate. Rep. Tusler seeks to continue his family's legacy protecting the environment and promoting the use of the state parks system. His work to restore general funding for the state parks, halt fee increases in the 2017-19 State Budget and introduction of the Parks Revitalization Act led the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks to award him their "Legislator of the Year" award.

"I am honored to have been named Legislator of the Year, but there is more to be done. I am glad I have the opportunity to protect and promote the State Parks System," Tusler said.

Rep. Tusler will accept the award this weekend at the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks banquet held at Heritage Hill State Historical Park in Green Bay. The State Senate passed the bill on a voice vote yesterday. Rep. Tusler hopes the Assembly takes up the bill during one of its floor sessions next week.