

Midwest Environmental Advocates: Petitioners ask Stepp to recuse herself from ongoing water pollution program review

Posted on Thursday, Feb 1, 2018

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MADISON, WI – Today Midwest Environmental Advocates and Petitioners asked EPA Region 5 Administrator Cathy Stepp to recuse herself from the ongoing review of the Petition for Corrective Action in Wisconsin.

[In 2015, sixteen Wisconsin residents filed a Petition with the EPA to ask for a formal review of Clean Water Act pollution permitting in the state.](#) Stepp had decision-making authority over the Petition during her time as the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Clean Water Act envisions a meaningful, impartial balance of power between the federal and state government, but this balance would be endangered unless Stepp recuses herself from the process now that she leads the EPA office Wisconsinites turned to for help.

Petitioners have all worked diligently, in some cases for over a decade, to uphold clean water laws in Wisconsin. Those efforts constitute a non-partisan fight to protect public health; neither MEA nor Petitioners will stand by and allow a changing political climate to undo progress.

[Petitioner and DNR retiree Dave Marshall is a longtime protector of the Lower](#)

[Wisconsin Riverway](#). He states as follows: “Ms. Stepp . . . pollution was allowed to occur under your watch while you served as DNR Secretary, and this disqualifies you to represent EPA in responding to the Petition.”

The statewide Petitioner group highlights that the need for safe, healthy water transcends political and urban/rural boundaries. [Petitioner and Milwaukee Riverkeeper Cheryl Nenn](#) states that “a majority of Milwaukee’s rivers are impaired by polluted runoff and aren’t clean enough for swimming, fishing, and drinking. It’s important that EPA gets DNR back on track with effectively implementing and enforcing the Clean Water Act so that we can achieve cleaner waters and healthier communities.”

Read the recusal request letter to the EPA on Midwest Environmental Advocates’ website.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a public interest organization that uses the power of the law to support communities fighting for environmental accountability. Learn more about the Midwest Environmental Advocates on the web at midwestadvocates.org, like MEA on [Facebook](#) or follow @MidwestAdvocate on [Twitter](#).