

Sen. Baldwin: Door County angler joins Senator Baldwin to call for action on harmful algae blooms in Wisconsin lakes and rivers

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Patrick Neu of Forestville went to Washington to advocate for action on the algae bloom crisis impacting anglers, boaters, communities across Wisconsin

[Patrick's testimony at the hearing is available here](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Patrick Neu, an angler from Forestville, Wisconsin, joined U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, Ranking Member of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard, and her Senate colleagues at a hearing titled, “Harmful Algal Blooms: The Impact on Our Nation’s Waters.” The Senators heard testimony from Neu and other stakeholders about the harmful effects of the algae bloom crisis on tourism, public health and quality of life in Wisconsin and throughout the nation.

“The National Professional Anglers Association (NPAA) and our members are literally on the front line when it comes to harmful algal blooms,” **said Patrick Neu, Executive Director of the National Professional Anglers Association and President of the Future Angler Foundation.** “I’ve fished all my life in Wisconsin, and I and many of NPAA’s members have seen firsthand the negative impacts of harmful algal blooms can have on our state’s waters, the resulting losses of fishing opportunities and impacts on recreational fishing-dependent businesses. We commend Senator Baldwin for focusing on these issues, and the Senate for unanimously passing the *Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2017*. We hope that the House will pass a similar bill in the very near future so that we can continue attacking the causes of these devastating algal outbreaks on a bipartisan basis.”

“With over 15,000 lakes and 84,000 miles of rivers and coastline on two of the Great Lakes and the Mighty Mississippi, we have a lot to lose from harmful algae blooms in Wisconsin, which threaten our proud sport fishing tradition and our robust tourism industry. Algae blooms clog waters across Wisconsin each year, upending plans of anglers, boaters and people who just wanted to enjoy the water. ‘Getting away from it all’ by heading to the lake shouldn’t mean being greeted by an unmistakable stench and waves of pea soup,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “The Wisconsinites who live in waterfront communities and the many businesses that rely on healthy waterfronts need better, faster solutions to address these growing water quality challenges. Thank you to Patrick for joining me in Washington to call for urgent action on combating this national environmental crisis.”

“From South Florida to the Great Lakes to Alaska, harmful algal bloom are increasingly having negative impacts on fisheries resources and fishing opportunities,” **said Glenn Hughes, President of the American Sportfishing Association.** “Programs like the National Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Program and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative are incredibly important for developing the science and coordinating governmental efforts to mitigate these outbreaks. We are grateful to Senator Baldwin and other members of the Senate Commerce Committee for bringing attention to these issues and working to address them.”

Video of the full hearing and testimony from the witnesses is

available [here](#).

The presence of harmful algae blooms has long threatened Wisconsin's lakes and rivers throughout the state. In Green Bay, a "dead zone" has persisted in the bay's deep waters for over 20 years, slowly removing oxygen from the waters, [killing fish and other aquatic life](#). Climate change is creating increasingly favorable conditions for this algae growth, and a recent study by University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee researchers shows that this dead zone [is only getting worse](#).

Senator Baldwin worked with a bipartisan group of colleagues to pass the *Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act*, which would ensure that local communities have the tools to address water quality challenges and identify the local factors driving these toxic environmental hazards. Senators at Tuesday's hearing urged the House of Representatives to take up the bill and pass it before algae bloom response programs expire at the end of September.

Baldwin has also championed funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) which provides funding to communities for projects to protect and improve the health of the Great Lakes, including fighting the growth of harmful algae blooms.

Photos from the hearing are also available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).