

Democratic members of Joint Committee on Finance: GOP block Democratic efforts to protect drinking water

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Republican Politicians refuse to Address Wisconsin Lead Poisoning Crisis

MADISON, WI – Despite several proposals from Governor Evers to improve access to clean drinking water, Republicans on the Joint Finance Committee blocked Democratic efforts to invest \$35 million for lead service line replacement and address the contaminated water crisis. Governor Evers declared 2019 the Year of Clean Drinking Water with a focus on pro-active initiatives to protect our drinking water after years of Republican neglect and failure to address water contamination issues. The Democratic members of the Joint Finance Committee issued the following statements following the rejection of lead contamination funding:

“Our priorities are the priorities of the people. Families all across our state deserve to trust that the water from their tap is clean,” said Representative Goyke (D-Milwaukee). “It is time to fund these critical programs and put the health and safety of our communities first.”

“For 8 years, the Republicans have cut positions and rolled back protections to safeguard clean drinking water for all Wisconsinites,” said Representative Taylor (D-Madison). “Finally, we have a governor who makes protecting our water resources and drinking water a top priority. In 2016, the statewide average of children under the age of 6 who are lead poisoned is higher than in Flint, Michigan. Republicans should be ashamed of not only voting against this \$35 million for lead service line replacement, but voting against Wisconsin children.”

“Everywhere we went during the budget hearings, the people of this state asked for meaningful action to address this drinking water public health crisis,” said Senator Johnson (D-Milwaukee). “Every single family in our state should know the water they cook with, bathe with, and drink is clean and safe, no matter what region or zip code they live in. Every Wisconsin community is facing one or more water contamination challenges, and it is time that we put their health and lives first.”

“The Governor’s budget takes critical steps towards improving water quality and the health of Wisconsinites around the state,” said Senator Erpenbach (D-West Point). “Republicans should be working with Democrats and the Governor to find permanent, sustainable solutions to ensure that everyone has access to clean drinking water. It’s time to stop playing politics with public health, and put the people first.”