

Rep. Shankland: No time to wait for clean water

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MADISON – Today, the Joint Finance Committee approved Governor Evers' recommended \$13.5 million increase in bonding for the Clean Water Fund Program and a \$3.5 million increase for the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program. These critical revolving loan programs help communities address their failing water infrastructure, which can have a significant effect on their ability to provide clean water to their residents. Republican committee members blocked a Democratic motion to invest \$35 million for lead service line replacement, after having removed the governor's recommended \$40 million investment for the same purpose from the budget last week.

Rep. Shankland issued the following statement in response:

"All of the clean water initiatives put forth by Governor Evers in his budget show both his recognition of the enormous impact of water contamination in our state, and his commitment to providing clean drinking water to all Wisconsinites. This is an entirely preventable public health crisis, and Governor Evers' proposal takes significant steps towards improving water quality and the public health. While I am thankful that there will be an increased investment in the Clean Water Fund Program and Safe Drinking Water Loan Program in the biennial budget, I am extremely disappointed by Republican legislators' outright refusal to address lead service line replacement in the budget.

"Water quality is a vital issue that affects every community in our state, and we

should be working together to ensure that everyone has access to clean drinking water. Not in two, or ten, or twenty years, but right now. There is no time to wait. In the Year of Clean Drinking Water, I call on my Republican colleagues to work with Democrats and the governor to fund and support permanent, sustainable solutions to our water quality issues, instead of playing politics with something so crucial. I'm grateful for Governor Evers' strong leadership on this issue, and will continue to work with everyone to support water quality efforts in Wisconsin."