

Sen. Cowles: Pollution prevention partnerships unanimously supported by Senate

Posted on Thursday, May 16, 2019

>> **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: Senator Robert Cowles ~ (608) 266-0484

MADISON- Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after 2019 Senate Bill 91, also known as P3: Wisconsin's Trading Marketplace to Create a Pollution Prevention Partnership which was authored by Senator Cowles, Representative Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay) and Senator Jerry Petrowski (R-Marathon), passed the Senate during today's floor session by a vote of 32-0 as amended in Committee:

"Senate Bill 91 represents an exciting and innovative opportunity to provide farmers and other nonpoint sources with some financial incentive to implement more advanced land and water management practices. This bipartisan, groundbreaking effort will promote more water quality trades by introducing a third-party clearinghouse into the currently inflexible pollutant trading process to create a marketplace for trades."

These mutually beneficial water quality trades allow nonpoint-source dischargers to create a reduction in total pollutants entering a waterbody, quantified as credits, to be purchased through a central clearinghouse. These credits will provide necessary pollution reduction to a point source, such as a municipal wastewater treatment plant or cheese factory, to comply with the requirements of their wastewater permit. Trades would take place within the largest hydrologic area possible while still resulting in a reduction of pollutants entering a waterway.

"Today's vote helped to set Wisconsin on a course to create the first statewide

water quality pollutant trading clearinghouse. While the goal is to create a reduction in nutrients entering waterways to help clean up our waters, Senate Bill 91 would have numerous ecological, financial, and recreational benefits not just for those involved in trades, but for all Wisconsinites and tourists to our great state. By bringing more farmers to the table and incentivizing them to implement proven land conservation strategies, coupled with the opportunity for industry to comply with permit requirements in a more cost effective manner, this bill has the potential to make a positive impact on our state's economy.

"Nearly every point- and nonpoint-source has the potential to benefit from this legislation, and dozens of groups understand this benefit and have expressed strong support for these Pollution Prevention Partnerships. Working to help stabilize markets while reducing water pollution is a win for everyone. I'd like to thank my fellow authors, Representative Kitchens and Senator Petrowski, and the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee Members, Senators Olsen, Marklein, Miller and Hansen, for their support of this legislation."

2019 Senate Bill 91 was drafted through years of work with stakeholders and vetting the third-party process. This work has helped to gain the support of 30 groups ranging from the Wisconsin Economic Development Association to Clean Wisconsin, League of Wisconsin Municipalities to Farm Bureau, and Cheese Makers to Trout Unlimited. The DNR under the previous and current administrations has also been deeply involved in the drafting process, and have expressed support for Senate Bill 91. This legislation awaits action by the Assembly Committee on Local Government.