

# Sen. Kapenga: Waukesha area legislators introduce bill to lower water bills for ratepayers

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Madison, WI – On Monday, Senator Chris Kapenga (R-Delafield), Representative Adam Neylon (R-Pewaukee) and Representative Scott Allen (R-Waukesha) introduced a bill that would authorize the Wisconsin Department of Administration to allow repayment of federal Safe Drinking Water Loans over a maximum of 30 years, instead of the current 20-year maximum.

The Federal Safe Drinking Water Loans program helps local governments finance drinking water infrastructure projects needed to meet federal drinking water standards. The City of Waukesha is facing an expensive project to switch from its depleted and naturally contaminated groundwater supply to a safe and sustainable Lake Michigan water supply. It is estimated that a change from a 20-year to a 30-year repayment could save the average Waukesha residential ratepayer up to \$56 a year.

During the last budget, Senator Kapenga and Representatives Neylon and Allen successfully championed a similar provision that extended allowable loan periods to 30-years for wastewater projects. This move was projected to save the average Waukesha ratepayer up to \$84 per year.

“Due to recent changes in federal law, the state has the opportunity to grant more flexibility in how it funds water infrastructure projects to the benefit of ratepayers” said Representative Allen.

“Between these two actions, the average Waukesha household water bill will be up to \$140 lower per year than if this measure wasn’t passed,” said Senator Kapenga. “This is a way to help lessen the impact of switching to Lake Michigan water.”

“Water infrastructure has a useful life spanning generations. Sharing the costs of these projects over more years lessens the impact on current ratepayers and more fairly allocates costs,” said Representative Neylon.