

# Assembly approves new steps to address PFAS, Dems say doesn't go far enough

Posted on Friday, Feb 21, 2020

The state Assembly early Friday approved legislation that would create additional steps to address PFAS contamination.

But the legislation didn't go as far as two bills that overwhelmingly cleared an Assembly committee earlier this week.

Rep. John Nygren, whose district has been found to have high PFAS groundwater contamination, called the bill a step forward. But he also said much more needs to be done to protect Wisconsinites.

"I don't want to walk away from this opportunity without getting some answers and certainty for my constituents," the Marinette Republican said.

**>> 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.](#)**

The PFAS provisions were added to another bill as an amendment, which would:

\*require a study that would include the health effects of PFAS, along with their safe destruction and disposal.

\*test water supplies for PFAS, offer remediation, and provide potable water or treatment systems in affected areas.

\*require the DNR to establish baselines for the labs that would test for PFAS.

\*require the DNR to include in its next budget request money to address PFAS.

\*allow the DNR to recover the costs of testing, investigations and providing temporary water from a responsible party who has used a firefighting foam containing PFAS.

Nygren worked with Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay, on two bills to address the chemicals with the Marinette-Peshtigo areas in their districts the epicenter of the contamination that's been discovered so far.

Rep. Katrina Shankland, D-Stevens Point, said she was morally offended at the amendment and that it was "going backwards" by limiting the Department of Natural Resources' regulatory ability on PFAS.

"The difference between 20 parts per trillion and the EPA advisory limit of 70 parts per trillion it isn't 50, it's human lives, Shankland said, visibly shaken. "That's the difference."

Nygren disputed her claim, saying the 70 ppt language in the bill would only affect water testing lab certification.

AB 842 and AB 843 cleared committee this week 12-0 and 11-1, respectively. That package would give the DNR up to three years to put in place emergency rules as it addresses PFAS; pull \$3.4 million annually from the state's environmental fund to help pay for remediation; and provide \$1.4 million in one-time money to test municipal water supply systems.

The amended bill would have to clear the Senate before it could go to the gov's desk. Gov. Tony Evers previously indicated he would sign AB 842 and 843.