

Land and Water Conservation Association: Support for AB 790, funding for county conservation departments

Posted on Tuesday, Feb 18, 2020

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Dear Speaker Vos, Majority Leader Steineke, and Members of the Assembly,

I am contacting you on behalf of WI Land+Water's 800 statewide members—county land and water conservation department staff and elected county board supervisors—to urge you to support AB 790. We appreciated the unanimous bipartisan support this bill received in its committee hearing, and the additional overwhelming support shown by agricultural and conservation interests, alike.

The bill would provide an additional \$2.9 million dollars to county land and water conservation departments to better enable them to provide boots-on-the-ground technical assistance to farmers and private landowners, helping them achieve their land management objectives, while at the same time meeting baseline conservation standards.

Among other things, county conservation departments support both producer-led and waterfront property groups, and they act as the front-line responders in emergency situations such as flood events. As demonstrated by the broad support for increased funding to county land and water conservation departments on display at last year's Water Quality Task Force hearings, Wisconsinites see great value in the role these conservation professionals play to protect water quality and support a viable agricultural industry at the same time.

I ask that you support AB 790 when it comes before you for a vote today.