

Rep. Hintz: Evers effect pushes Assembly passage of water quality bills

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MADISON – Today, the State Assembly unanimously passed 10 bipartisan bills related to water quality. Last year, Governor Evers declared 2019 as the “Year of Clean Drinking Water” which was the catalyst for these efforts. After the governor introduced significant initiatives in his budget proposal, the Water Quality Task Force task force held a total of 14 public hearings across Wisconsin which led to the bills passed today. The “Evers Effect” has led to Republicans following the governor’s lead on issues that they previously ignored or failed to act upon. Assembly Democratic Leader Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) released the following statement on these bills and the governor’s commitment to water quality initiatives:

“The clean water bills passed today are a long-overdue step in the right direction. After eight years of inaction on key issues facing Wisconsin including water quality, Republicans are following the lead of Governor Evers who declared 2019 as “The Year of Clean Drinking Water.” Thanks to the Evers Effect, communities across Wisconsin will see a meaningful, positive difference in their water quality.”

Some highlights included in the legislative package:

- **[AB 789](#)**: This proposal supports low-income families by helping them

remediate or treat the cause of their well contamination.

- **AB 790:** This bill funds county land and water conservation staff by an additional \$3 million, the recommended amount from conservation groups.
- **AB 797:** This proposal prohibits the sale of coal tar-based sealant products and high PAH sealant products, it also prohibits their use unless given an exemption by the DNR.
- **AB 801:** This proposal invests in the UW System Freshwater Collaborative. The bill requires the UW Board of Regents to fund a freshwater collaborative and appropriates \$2 million in FY2020-21.

“None of this would have been possible without Governor Evers’ leadership. Wisconsin has witnessed the erosion of water quality standards across the state under Republican control. Thanks to Governor Evers, we are finally turning the page and moving our state in the right direction. This \$10 million investment is a down payment for our future. We expect this conversation to continue into the next budget so we can fund the resources, staff, and programs needed to prevent contamination from happening altogether.”