

Rep. Rodriguez: Praises Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality

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MADISON – State Representative Jessie Rodriguez (R-Oak Creek) joined her Assembly Republican colleagues in supporting a package of bills aimed at addressing water quality in Wisconsin.

The bill package was brought forth by the Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality, a bicameral and bipartisan committee that was established in February 2019 to study the issue of water quality and develop ways to address this topic through policy. The committee spent several months travelling the state, holding 14 public hearings throughout Wisconsin and hearing from hundreds of constituents.

"I applaud the members of the Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality for their work in the committee and for taking the time to travel across our great state to listen to Wisconsinites on ways we can protect and preserve our water resources," said Rep. Rodriguez.

One of the thirteen bills introduced by the committee, [Assembly Bill 801](#) (AB 801), will build upon the freshwater science studies that the University of Wisconsin System has championed for years. The School of Freshwater Sciences at UW-Milwaukee is currently the only school of its kind in the country and serves as a leader in freshwater sciences. AB 801 will provide resources to build on existing programs by establishing and funding the University of Wisconsin Freshwater Collaborative.

In addition to establishing undergraduate programs at six UW campuses, the Collaborative will focus on ways to address two challenges of high importance to the task force: Agricultural Water Management and Water Quality Safety and Emerging Contaminants. Water is a fast-growing sector in the world economy, and this legislation will help Wisconsin universities prepare students to enter the workforce.

“The School of Freshwater Sciences has become a trademark of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and our region,” said Rep. Rodriguez. “This legislation is important because it will allow the UW System to expand upon their work as a leader in freshwater science research, making the University of Wisconsin a destination for aspiring students who wish to join the workforce in a growing water economy.”