

Sen. Cowles: Children's health wins the support of Assembly

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MADISON– Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after the Assembly approved two efforts lead by Cowles in Senate to protect children's health. One of the efforts passed includes part of the Supporting Children's Health by Ousting Outdated Lead (SCHOOL) Acts to address lead in school drinking water by requiring testing and, if necessary, requiring that contaminated water sources be taken offline and replaced with clean water sources while encouraging long-term remediation:

“Lead exposure is bad for all ages, but children are particularly susceptible to negative consequences including changes in their physical development leading to health challenges and stunting of their mental growth causing behavioral issues throughout their childhood, teenage-years, and beyond. With the SCHOOL Act, the Assembly has advanced a bipartisan solution to give our youth a brighter future by reducing lead exposure and giving parents and guardians the peace-of-mind that their kids won't drink lead-laden water while at school.”

Another effort lead by Cowles in the Senate that was passed by the Assembly, AB 797 authored with Representative Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay), prohibits the sale of coal tar-based sealant products beginning on January 1st, 2021, and prohibits the application of such products beginning on July 1st, 2021. These products have been shown to increase the risk of cancer among children and cause harm to water quality and aquatic life.

“The long-term costs to the state from overexposure to PAH in health care expenses, lost wages leading to lost productivity and tax revenue, and environmental remediation expenditures are substantial. Some of these costs can be avoided by passing this legislation, and in the process, we can ensure a healthier

future for Wisconsin's youth and cleaner waterways for recreation and aquatic wildlife. I'm pleased to see the Assembly pass AB 797, and hope to gain support from the Senate in March."