

Sens. Cowles, Petrowski, Kitchens, Mursau, Novak, Krug: Introduce innovative model to provide clean drinking water while examining the extent of PFAS contamination in Wisconsin

Posted on Monday, Feb 3, 2020

>> 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.](#)

MADISON– Senators Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Jerry Petrowski (R-Marathon) and Representatives Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay), Jeff Mursau (R-Crivitz), Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville), and Scott Krug (R-Rome) released the following joint statement on a new effort that was introduced by these Legislators to provide clean drinking water to people in areas of the state with the worst contamination and to study the extent of PFAS pollution in Wisconsin. These areas of the state with the worst contamination, to be set by the Department of Natural Resources under proposed statutory guidelines, will be labeled ‘PFAS Management Zones’:

“PFAS contamination of water in a growing number of locations around the state is causing serious hardship for hundreds of Wisconsin households. As the Legislature continues discussions on addressing this emerging contaminant and the DNR begins the rulemaking process for certain PFAS compounds, we’re concerned that the true extent of PFAS contamination in Wisconsin is yet to be determined. We’re offering legislation to establish PFAS Management Zones as a solution to this lack of information and more importantly as a way to immediately remedy residents’ concerns over access to clean drinking water.

“LRBs 5179 and 5180 provides the DNR with the structure and resources necessary

to learn more about the scope of PFAS pollution in our communities. This bill is also the only bill that would begin providing clean water now by qualifying households with PFAS contamination for the Well Compensation Grant Program and making communities eligible for state loan programs to begin upgrading drinking water and wastewater facilities to address PFAS pollution as they prepare for permanent standards. The public data provided in these bills will help the Legislature and the DNR to create more sound policies that protect waterbodies, promote public health, and coordinate with our business community and municipal utilities.

“We applaud the efforts introduced on Friday by Representative Nygren and Senator Hansen, but no one bill can be the complete solution to PFAS contamination in Wisconsin. We believe that setting up PFAS Management Zones will complement and strengthen that effort as we work to make Wisconsin a leader in addressing PFAS pollution.”

The proposals, LRB 5179 providing structure behind the effort and LRB 5180 providing resources to carry out these efforts, were submitted for introduction on Friday. An overview of these bills is attached to the release.