

Sens. Erpenbach, Bewley, Smith, Reps. Considine, Meyers: Team with Gov. on flood prevention and resilience plan

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MADISON – Wisconsin has endured years of flood damage affecting farmers, displacing families, damaging businesses and destroying infrastructure. That is why we have circulated the Flood Prevention and Resilience Plan. Due to a changing climate, flooding has unfortunately become more frequent and severe and it is only going to get worse. It is estimated that over \$40 billion worth of Wisconsin properties, businesses and homes are located in a 100-year floodplain, so it is vital that our state takes steps to support communities in their efforts to combat flooding and provide them with the infrastructure they need to bounce back from disaster.

With spring floods approaching, the time for action and preparation is now. Legislators across the state are circulating common-sense, smart policies for flood prevention and recovery programs. The authors released the following statements:

“Years of delayed maintenance on our roads and bridges have made them even more vulnerable to flood damage. Creating a Flood Mitigation Pilot Program in the DOT will help local communities make targeted investments,” noted Senator Bewley (D-Mason). “As they say, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure – these improvements to local infrastructure will forestall damage going forward, saving taxpayers money in the long run.”

“So much of the 81st Assembly District has felt the impact of flooding,” said Representative Considine (D-Baraboo). “That is why I am introducing the flood insurance income tax deduction. This bill may incentivize homeowners obtaining

coverage and minimize the financial burden if their home suffers flood damage. Despite the increased flooding across the state, few residences have flood insurance. This bill can help ease the impacts felt on homeowners before and after a flood.”

“My district was hit hard by flooding, and we are still seeing communities dealing with the damage, and unfortunately, people all over Wisconsin are seeing the same thing,” said Senator Erpenbach (D-West Point). “I am happy to be circulating proposals, alongside my colleagues and Governor Evers to allow additional bonding for the soil and water resource management program and to allow homeowners to deduct flood insurance premiums. With flooding events and heavy rainfall only expected to increase, these proposals can help with needed infrastructure and the affordability of flood insurance.”

“The 74th Assembly District experienced devastating and deadly floods in 2016 and 2018. It is imperative that we invest and protect our infrastructure during flooding, and by creating the Flood Mitigation Program in the DOT, we can help our local communities restore roads and infrastructure and forestall damage going forward. Communities need the resources necessary to protect Wisconsinites and reduce damage, and this proactive legislation will save taxpayers money and accomplish that goal,” said Representative Beth Meyers (D-Bayfield).

“Western Wisconsin was hit with three separate hundred-year floods in the span of three years. Storms are becoming more severe and more frequent due to climate change,” said Senator Smith (D-Eau Claire). “These devastating floods are completely changing the landscape. We must be proactive by making additional investments to the Municipal Flood Control Grant Program to help with flood storage, property acquisitions and better mapping for flood prevention.”