

Wisconsin Conservation Notice: Assembly attempts to provide political cover while constituents suffer the consequences

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MADISON – In a return to late night, last-minute tactics just before the end of the Assembly’s session, GOP legislators hastily wrote and passed a pitiful amendment to an already inadequate bill and are now claiming it as a victory over potentially deadly PFAS pollution.

At the center of this failure is Rep. John Nygren who, on the floor of the Assembly, rationalized his own failure to pass a decent PFAS compromise bill co-authored by Sen. Dave Hansen by falsely claiming that PFAS chemicals are merely a “local issue.”

PFAS are a well-documented problem across Wisconsin, and as testing continues, the scope of contamination is widening at an alarming rate – despite industry’s efforts to stamp out further testing for the dangerous toxins that are leeching into drinking water from an array of household and industrial products.

Rep. Nygren’s constituents live near what is considered “ground zero” for PFAS contamination. In Marinette, there’s emerging evidence and stories of cancer clusters, thyroid defects, and hormone and fertility problems.

Executive Director Kerry Schumann had this to say about last night’s activities:

“If these pro-polluter lawmakers want to play political games late at night to quench their thirst for political theater, that’s their prerogative. But, when these purely political tactics are hurting people, it’s not silly, it’s not funny – it’s downright dangerous. People will suffer because of this failure.

Rep. John Nygren has had over a year to pass legislation to protect his constituents from the number one threat to their health and safety, and he didn’t get the job done. Our organization will remind voters of that this election season. We will not allow him to trot this out as a victory to fool voters into thinking he actually stepped up and did his job. He didn’t.

What happened in the Assembly last night is clear – pro-polluter politicians tried to make it look like they care and are doing something about PFAS. In reality, they let down the people who are struggling with health care bills, devastating illnesses, and constant worry because the water that came out of their faucets made them sick.

These legislators need to look into the eyes of a sick child, or a mother who lost a pregnancy, or a cancer victim and tell them that they did nothing to help them.”

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