

Kaul sues to remove Prehn from Natural Resources Board

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Dem AG Josh Kaul has filed a lawsuit seeking to force Frederick Prehn from the Natural Resources Board after the Wausau dentist declined calls to step down more than three months after his six-year appointment ended.

Prehn, the board chair, has cited precedence that allows board members to continue serving until their replacement has been confirmed by the state Senate.

But Kaul argued in the Dane County lawsuit that state law on DNR board appointments doesn't include such a holdover period.

The suit notes other statutes specifically say appointees may continue serving after their term and until a successor is elected or confirmed. But DOJ argued in the suit that state law specific to the DNR board doesn't include similar language.

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"Dr. Prehn's term is over. His attempt to remain on the Natural Resources Board indefinitely, in defiance of the will of the voters, is fundamentally undemocratic," Kaul said in announcing the suit.

Prehn said today Kaul's suit is about more than his decision to remain on the board, arguing it was about the powers of the Legislature to confirm a gubernatorial nominee.

"The fact the DOJ will not wait for the normal confirmation process to play out just shows how political this process is for Attorney General Josh Kaul," Prehn said.

Former GOP Gov. Scott Walker appointed Prehn to the board, and his six-year term expired May 1. The GOP-run state Senate has yet to take action on Gov. Tony Evers'

appointment of Sandra Naas, an Ashland teacher, to replace Prehn. While he continues to serve, the board remains controlled 4-3 by Walker appointees.

Several environmental groups had urged Kaul to take legal action to force Prehn from the board. Kaul's suit comes one week after the board voted to approve a quota for this fall's wolf hunt that is nearly twice what agency staff had recommended.

The suit seeks an order taking Prehn from the board or a declaratory judgment that Evers may remove him.

[Read the complaint](#)