

Sen. Jacque: Governor signs bill for clear ports, cleaner beaches

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MADISON, WI... Gov. Evers' signing today of DNR regulatory reform legislation will promote clearing of Great Lakes ports and supply chains, and encourage efforts to clean and restore beaches, according to a Northeast Wisconsin lawmaker.

State Sen. André Jacque (R-De Pere), co-author of the measure with State Rep. Shae Sortwell (R-Two Rivers), said officials from Two Rivers had supported these reforms, along with numerous other local elected and appointed officials along the lakeshore.

"I'm glad Gov. Evers agrees with these common sense adjustments that maintain environmental protections while saving money for local taxpayers, who otherwise face substantial costs," said Sen. Jacque, a member of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus. "The disposed materials are a valuable asset that coastal communities can reuse to shore up, clean up, and reclaim beach areas."

Sediment and sand accumulation is a naturally occurring process in our rivers and harbors. To keep harbors safe for economic activity and recreational boating, they need to be dredged. Additionally, higher water levels across the Great Lakes continue to impact coastal communities and reduce the size of beaches.

Sen. Jacque said one best practice to promote coastal resiliency is "beach nourishment," allowing replenished/recycled beach sand dredged from offshore to maintain the natural beach area and protective offshore sand bar system.

"The US Army Corps of Engineers employs these processes, but when the DNR controls the process, it had proved to be practically unworkable," said Sen. Jacque.

The bill ([Senate Bill 93/Assembly Bill 99](#)) signed by Gov. Evers:

- Facilitates disposal of material dredged from Lake Michigan or Lake Superior by requiring the DNR to, by rule, exempt facilities from various solid waste standards as they would pertain to disposal of dredged material
- Requires DNR to hold a public hearing in the county where a facility is located before approving a request to accept dredged materials that contain PCBs or heavy metals
- Exempts disposal of dredged materials from the various tipping fees

Sen. Jacque said similar regulatory reform legislation was enacted in Indiana in 2018 and championed by both parties, with unanimous bi-partisan support in both chambers.

The legislation was signed into law as 2021 Wisconsin Act 93.