

# Barnes Campaign: Calls for bipartisan action on PFAS in new op-ed

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On Earth Day, Lt. Governor and U.S. Senate candidate Mandela Barnes released an [op-ed](#) calling for bipartisan action on the state and federal level to protect the environment and address PFAS.

## **Key Points:**

- *The global celebration of Earth Day has its roots right here in Wisconsin*
- *It's time to return to Wisconsin's roots of bipartisan cooperation to protect our environment. The stakes are too high for us to fail to act. From clean air and clean water to climate change and tourism, every corner of our state is affected.*
- *I'm proud to be part of an administration that has proposed legislation to establish drinking water standards and fund critical cleanup. Unfortunately, for two consecutive years, those efforts have been blocked by a Legislature doing the bidding of large chemical manufacturers.*
- *Earth Day is all about being engaged, learning about, and caring for the environment. It's time we elect a U.S. senator that will bring that commitment to Washington.*

## **The Capital Times: Opinion | [We need everyone to join fight against PFAS and protect the environment](#)**

On this Earth Day, Wisconsin must reembrace our deep and proud tradition of commonsense cooperation on environmental protection.

The global celebration of Earth Day has its roots right here in Wisconsin. Former Wisconsin Gov. and U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson believed that by teaching people about the environment, by exposing every Wisconsinite and every American to the wonders of our natural world, we could build a society that demands better for our environment and for the people that rely on it: from our farmers to our sportsmen and sportswomen to those exposed to environmentally degrading toxins in their own backyards.

With Wisconsinites standing behind him, Sen. Nelson launched Earth Day in 1970, and his work had an immediate impact. Just a few years after the launch of Earth Day, Democrats and Republicans worked together to pass the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and establish the Environmental Protection Agency.

It's time to return to Wisconsin's roots of bipartisan cooperation to protect our environment. The stakes are too high for us to fail to act. From clean air and clean water to climate change and tourism, every corner of our state is affected.

Take the issue of PFAS. Right now, thousands of Wisconsin families need to use bottled water to cook, drink, and even brush their teeth. That's because toxic chemicals, known as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, have contaminated the water supply at dangerously high levels. These chemicals are linked to cancer, liver damage and a host of other serious diseases.

To be clear, this is a crisis that has affected every corner of the state, from Madison to Marinette, from Milwaukee to Eau Claire.

I'm proud to be part of an administration that has proposed legislation to establish drinking water standards and fund critical cleanup. Unfortunately, for two consecutive years, those efforts have been blocked by a Legislature doing the bidding of large chemical manufacturers.

But there is hope for bipartisan cooperation to protect our environment and ensure every single Wisconsinite has access to clean air and clean water and can enjoy our

beautiful natural world.

In Washington, Democrats and Republicans came together last year to pass the historic bipartisan infrastructure law, which includes over \$10 billion to help localities identify and address PFAS contamination.

But Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson hasn't joined his colleagues in the bipartisan fight against PFAS. In fact, Johnson admitted that he didn't even read the bipartisan infrastructure law before voting against it, and he then added that he's "praying for gridlock" on measures like this.

It's not just PFAS that we have to come together and address in our communities. We have to do so much more to protect the environment and the Wisconsinites across our state who are already facing the devastating effects of climate change. We can make progress on these critical issues, but we can't do it if we elect leaders to Washington who aren't interested in solving the problem.

Earth Day is all about being engaged, learning about, and caring for the environment. It's time we elect a U.S. senator that will bring that commitment to Washington.