

# Rep. Duchow: Bill to curtail avian flu receives Senate hearing

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**Madison, WI** – Today, Senate Bill 1084/Assembly Bill 1032 received a public hearing in the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue. Introduced by Representative Cindi Duchow (R-Delafield) and Senator Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point), the bill would allow the Natural Resources Board to sell lands owned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that are adjacent to, or within one mile of, a commercial egg farm. The authors believe that creating an additional buffer around egg-laying facilities could help reduce the risk of highly pathogenic avian flu spreading to Wisconsin farms.

Recently, a commercial egg farm near Palmyra experienced an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian flu. It marks the second outbreak at the facility in as many years and the third since 2022. These repeated outbreaks have been difficult for the farm's workers and the broader community that relies on the facility.

During the review of the situation, Rep. Duchow learned that a nearby property had recently been developed as a wild bird sanctuary. Because wild birds can carry avian flu, the proximity of wildlife habitats to commercial poultry facilities has raised concerns among farmers and public officials about potential transmission risks.

The owner of the Palmyra facility joined Representative Duchow during committee testimony at the Capitol in support of the bill.

"I have heard from several members of the community who have been affected by this outbreak," said Rep. Duchow. "My heart goes out to the workers, families, and neighbors dealing with the consequences of this situation. This legislation is intended to provide a practical step the state can take to help reduce future risks and protect Wisconsin's farmers and communities. I hope that by acting now, we

can help prevent something like this from happening again.”

SB 1084/AB 1032 now awaits consideration by the full Senate before potentially moving to the Governor’s desk for enactment.