

Sen. Spreitzer: Reacts to Republican rejection of Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

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MADISON – After Republicans abruptly adjourned today’s Wisconsin State Senate Session, State Senator Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) released the following statement reacting to the Republican majority’s decision to remove bills reauthorizing the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program from the day’s calendar and refusal to even discuss an amendment to provide a one-year extension for the program:

“Today’s actions by Senate Republicans are a disappointing display of legislative cowardice. By dropping these bills from the calendar at the eleventh hour, Republicans have chosen to walk away from the table rather than engage in a constructive debate on the floor of the Senate about the need for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program – a program named for two Wisconsin Governors of different parties that has been supported on a bipartisan basis for decades. I have heard from constituents across the 15th Senate District who deeply value the public lands, trails, and hunting grounds protected by Knowles-Nelson projects, and I know that every one of my colleagues has heard the same support from their constituents too.

“While the bills coming before us were flawed, Senate Democrats offered a common-sense solution: a one-year reauthorization to keep this program running and protected while we work toward a long-term agreement. Instead of choosing stability for conservation efforts in our state, Republicans rejected that extension, dodged debating it, and silenced this conversation, and failed to even pass their own flawed bill on the subject.

“Because of this failure of leadership, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is

now at serious risk of lapsing this summer. Our constituents deserve better than a legislature that refuses to vote on the issues that impact our state's future. My Senate Democratic colleagues and I remain ready to pass a clean extension or a robust, long-term renewal, but right now that requires a Republican majority willing to lead.”