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Senator-Elect Agard Comments on PFAs Deregulation by GOP Legislators

Republican Legislators Hold Yet Another “Public” Hearing to Roll Back Forever Chemical Regulations

MADISON- Today, the Republican led Joint Committee on Administrative Rules met to suspend vital parts of a Department of Natural Resources rule that would limit the usage of firefighting foams that contain dangerous forever chemicals, PFAs. This emergency rule took effect earlier this month and outlines steps that testing facilities must take to contain and treat fluorinated foam and effectively prohibits them from discharging water with detectable amounts of PFAS.

Senator-Elect Agard (D-Madison) released this statement:

“Access to clean, safe drinking water is a fundamental human right. Yet today, Republicans held a hearing, in which the public was not allowed to give testimony that rolled back regulations to protect people from negatively impacted by PFAS and other dangerous chemicals.

“Last session, I was proud to co-author legislation that helped mitigate public health risks based on medical and scientific research. The bill I worked on with Senator Rob Cowles (R- Green Bay) was reasonable, bipartisan, and pragmatic. Only allowing the use of firefighting foam in emergency fire response was an important step, but not the last step, in efforts to stop these cancer-causing chemicals from harming our health and our environment.

“Today’s actions by the Republicans on JCRAR take us back to a place where our people are in harm's way, and puts them at risk of being exposed to PFAS in their daily lives. Each legislator who voted for this should be asked why they want to eliminate this common sense rule that ensures our water is clean and safe to drink.

“This rule was an emergency rule for a reason - PFAS are a public health hazard and can create lasting damages to communities across Wisconsin. There are places in our state right now that rely on bottled water deliveries to have access to safe drinking water because of PFAS contamination. In the upcoming session, I will work hard to restore these protections to ensure Wisconsinites can have confidence that they are safe when they turn on the tap in their homes.”

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Melissa served on the Dane County Board and the Wisconsin State Assembly prior to being elected to represent the 16th Senate District. Concern for the greater community and a vision for a better Wisconsin brought her to public service and community activism. She is a proud mother of 4 boys, and lives on Madison’s northside.