



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 21, 2021

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Sen. Roys Statement on Elevated PFAS in Madison Lakes

Madison – Today, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources released new data showing elevated levels of “forever chemicals” known as PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in every Madison area lake and throughout the Yahara watershed. PFAS are dangerous contaminants that are found in many household and industrial products, including certain kinds of firefighting foam. Because these carcinogens do not break down over time, they bio-accumulate and pose a significant risk to animal and human health.

“Madison’s lakes -- and waterways throughout Wisconsin -- are in trouble. Recent sampling shows that our entire Yahara watershed and every Madison lake is contaminated with dangerous, cancer-causing PFAS. Wisconsin must take immediate action to protect our surface and groundwater.

“Last session, a broad bipartisan coalition passed a law to minimally regulate PFAS -- a step in the right direction led by Republican and Democratic legislators and signed by Gov. Tony Evers. Yet even those mild regulations were killed before they could start by six GOP members of the legislature’s Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCRAR).

“A small group of Republican legislators should not be able to block the implementation of a duly passed law to protect the lives, health, and water of Wisconsinites. It’s sad that on the very day we learn that our waters are poisoned, our equally poisonous politics mean that the Republicans on JCRAR will likely vote to permanently block PFAS regulation.

“The Republicans’ new grift is clear.

Step 1: Pass a weak bill so you can say you did something.

Step 2: Wait a few months for the attention to die down.

Step 3: Kill the new law by abusing the JCRAR process to block its implementation.

“Water is life. Wisconsin’s lakes and rivers are the heart of our communities. We must allow the DNR to do what the law requires -- to regulate PFAS and other pollutants and protect our health and water.”