



WisPolitics Staff <inbox@wispolitics.com>

Sen. Jacque's clean water bills head to Governor

1 message

Sen. Jacque <Sen.Jacque@legis.wisconsin.gov>
 To: "Sen. Jacque" <Sen.Jacque@legis.wisconsin.gov>

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ANDRÉ JACQUE

STATE SENATOR • 1ST SENATE DISTRICT

Phone: (608) 266-3512

Fax: (608) 282-3541

Sen.Jacque@legis.wi.gov

State Capitol - P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Contact: Senator André Jacque
 (608) 266-3512

SEN. JACQUE'S CLEAN WATER BILLS HEAD TO GOVERNOR

Measures extend funding for failing septic systems, harmonize state and federal compliance programs

MADISON, WI... Two initiatives in State Sen. André Jacque's (R-De Pere) Clean Water Agenda are on their way to the Governor's desk following passage today by the State Assembly.

"Wisconsin residents, employers and farmers want to protect our water because they know it's the right thing to do, and that their livelihoods depend on it," Sen. Jacque said. "These measures push state government to remove as many barriers as possible and promote these efforts."

Sen. Jacque's Clean Water Agenda includes:

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The Private On-site Wastewater Treatment System (POWTS, [Senate Bill 84](#))

This grant program, also referred to as the Wisconsin Fund, provides financial assistance to eligible owners of a principal residence and small commercial establishments by covering a portion of the cost of repairing or replacing failing POWTS. The program is designed to reimburse, on average, 60% of the cost of replacement or remediation, and has been used extensively throughout our state. The measure extends the sunset date of the grant program and provides additional program support for processing the existing backlog of applications.

"Remediation or replacement often costs thousands of dollars, which presents a real burden for a low income household and leads to the continued existence of environmental threats," Sen. Jacque said. The issue was frequently discussed last session throughout meetings of the legislative Clean Water Task Force of which Sen. Jacque was a member. "Throughout Northeast Wisconsin and the entire state, these failing septic systems are contaminating our groundwater, and this bill is a critical step toward cleaner water," added Sen. Jacque.

Environmental Compliance Audit Program (["Enviro-Check," Senate Bill 151](#))

Sen. Jacque said this common sense legislation removes disincentives associated with Wisconsin's Environmental Compliance Audit Program compared to a similar program offered through the federal Environmental Protection Agency. It was unanimously supported by the bi-partisan appointees of the Wisconsin Department of Natural (DNR) Resources Small Business Environmental Council (SBEC), with language suggested by the DNR.

“With different timelines, deadlines, and procedures to follow in order to use the Wisconsin audit program and one of EPA's audit policies, companies may avoid using whichever program seems less advantageous,” Sen. Jacque said. “With more uniformity, the programs can be used simultaneously and offer greater advantage to employers to proactively investigate their processes and operational impact while protecting the environment.”

Sen. Jacque said both bills received strong bipartisan support in committee, and he hoped Gov. Evers would sign these bills into law soon.

“We cannot choose between our environment and our economy,” Sen. Jacque said. “We need to safeguard the environment for future generations precisely because so many of Wisconsin's economic sectors and jobs - from agriculture to tourism and forestry - rely on clean water.”

Senator André Jacque represents Northeast Wisconsin's First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.

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