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CONTACT: Stacy Harbaugh, River Alliance of Wisconsin Communications Director,
608-257-2424 ext. 120, sharbaugh@wisconsinrivers.org

River Alliance applauds Governor Evers to veto PFAS bill

The Joint Finance Committee needs to release the PFAS Trust Fund

Wisconsin — River Alliance of Wisconsin thanks Governor Evers for vetoing Senate Bill 312 and calling the Joint Finance Committee into session to do their job to protect Wisconsinites' health.

“PFAS is an urgent issue that needs to be addressed in a serious way,” said River Alliance of Wisconsin Executive Director Allison Werner. “Instead we’ve watched the state legislature play partisan games to score political points with special interest groups like Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce. Senate Bill 312 is not the progress we need on PFAS.”

To be clear, Senate Bill 312 did not include an appropriation of funds. Without an appropriation, the bill does not spend the \$125 million dollars in the state PFAS Trust fund. However, the Joint Finance Committee has the authority to do so by funding the plan the DNR has put before them.

PFAS are widespread and expensive to clean up. \$125 million is nowhere near enough to meet the current needs of homeowners and municipalities with polluted drinking wells but it is a start. SB 312 would have made it harder for the state to hold those responsible for pollution accountable, and severely limit the amount of cleanup that can be done. SB 312 would have also limited grant programs only to PFAS substances for which there are standards. As we have seen with the Department of Natural Resources’ past attempts to create groundwater standards for PFAS, this legislature has little interest in such standards being created, thus also limiting any potential impact SB 312 would have had.

For real progress on PFAS, the Joint Finance Committee should approve the DNR’s most recent funding request on April 16th.

“When we play a partisan game with our water, all Wisconsinites lose in the protection of our health and our environment,” said Werner.

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River Alliance of Wisconsin empowers people to protect and restore water.