



CHRIS TAYLOR

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ♦ 76th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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For More Information, Contact:

Rep. Chris Taylor, 608-266-5342

GOP Action Moves State Backwards on PFAS

MADISON – Last week in the dark of the night right before the Assembly adjourned for the year, Republicans took regressive actions on the crisis of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contaminating water sources throughout the state. The amendment they passed called for several actions, such as requesting funds in the next biennial budget, that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) can already take. It also shifts the burden of cleaning up after polluters to local government and taxpayers, rather than holding polluters themselves accountable.

Assembly Democrats pushed for a vote on a compromise bill that has bipartisan support and would have held polluters accountable while providing \$7.7 million for PFAS-related programming, blood testing for impacted communities, and UW research on PFAS. But even Rep. John Nygren (R-Marquette), the author of this compromise bill, would not vote to move his own bill forward for the health and welfare of his community, at the risk of defying the powerful industry lobbyists, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC), the Wisconsin Paper Council, and Speaker Robin Vos.

In response, Representative Chris Taylor (D-Madison) issued the following statement.

“At a time when people in my community and across the state are afraid to drink the water coming out of their own taps, Republicans cannot resist their urge to give another handout to Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce and other industry groups. The amendment they rushed through in the middle of the night when their constituents were sleeping holds local taxpayers liable for the poisoning of their water sources, while letting polluters off the hook.

“These are kids and families in our communities, so the difference between action and inaction is the difference between contracting cancer or not. It can be a life or death difference. But Republicans in this legislature will vote against their own bills and against the best interests of their communities if WMC tells them to. That’s the level of corruption we are facing, and that’s why it’s more important than ever that people continue to make their voices heard and demand real meaningful action to address this contamination.”

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