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All Deserve Clean Drinking Water

Having clean, drinkable water should be a right for all. Unfortunately, we have seen that this is not always the case. The crisis in Flint, Michigan is perhaps the best known in the United States but it is not the only one. Jackson, Mississippi is currently going through a public health crisis, with 150,000 people currently lacking access to safe drinking water.

Even in Wisconsin, there are areas where people must drink bottled water due to wells contaminated with PFAS chemicals, which have been linked to certain diseases including cancer. As of December 31 of last year, 41% of water service lines in Milwaukee were still made of lead.

It's a huge concern, and luckily one that Governor Evers has been addressing in his time in office. In his first year as governor, he declared 2019 to be the "Year of Clean Drinking Water" and vowed to fight for clean drinking water in every Wisconsin home.

While most would think that is a common sense, nonpartisan goal, he has faced some stonewalling from Republicans in the Legislature. In 2019, the Wisconsin GOP stripped \$40,000,000 from Governor Evers' state budget that would have replaced lead service lines.

That has not stopped Governor Evers from helping to ensure clean drinking water. In August 2022, he announced a \$10,000,000 investment to treat or replace contaminated private drinking wells in Wisconsin. In February 2022, he announced a \$600,000 program for local communities that would like to test their water services for PFAS contamination. He has also signed an executive order creating an interagency coordinator that would focus on eliminating lead pollution in Wisconsin drinking water.

This is not an issue that will be solved overnight in Wisconsin. But I am thankful Governor Evers has been a leader on the issue, because all Wisconsinites deserve to be able to get water from their tap without worrying about whether or not it is safe to drink.

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