FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   **Contact: Rep. Deb Andraca**
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No More Anonymous Objectors:
Rep. Deb Andraca Applauds Governor Evers's Proposed Reforms to Joint Finance Review

Madison, Wis. – Today Governor Tony Evers announced an end to the Joint Finance Committee's "anonymous objection" tactic as part of his forthcoming state budget. An "anonymous objector" on the Joint Finance Committee nearly killed the popular Cedar Gorge project in Ozaukee County, which was saved by Governor Evers with an investment of federal ARPA funds last year.

"The Joint Finance Committee, as the oversight body for public spending, should be held to the highest levels of transparency and accountability," said Andraca. "Yet the committee continues to object to pre-approved Stewardship spending anonymously and refuses to hold public hearings in a timely manner. This is wrong and Wisconsinites deserve better from their elected officials."

The Joint Finance Committee continues to use the anonymous objection process to thwart other conservation projects, including the Pelican River Forest project in Northern Wisconsin. Governor Evers is proposing additional measures to make the review process of Stewardship projects more democratic and transparent by:

- Repealing the arbitrary requirement that all projects north of Highway 64 be subject to legislative review;
- Increasing the threshold for legislative review of stewardship grants and acquisitions from $250,000 to $500,000; and
- Requiring that if a member of the Legislature objects to a proposed stewardship project approval, that member's name and nature of the objection be announced publicly.

"These proposals by Governor Evers will bring more transparency and accountability to the Joint Finance Committee," continued Andraca. "I hope my colleagues will recognize the need for these proposals to restore the public's trust in how our taxpayer dollars are being spent."

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