



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

September 28th, 2017

Secretary Dan Meyer
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S Webster St
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Secretary Meyer,

We write today to request that, as the new Secretary of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources, you return stronger environmental enforcement measures to the Department. DNR's [Environmental Enforcement Handbook](#) states "The first and highest priority is to address and halt violations that pose actual or potential threats to public health or the environment." We ask that the Department stay true to this stated goal and strongly enforce environmental standards.

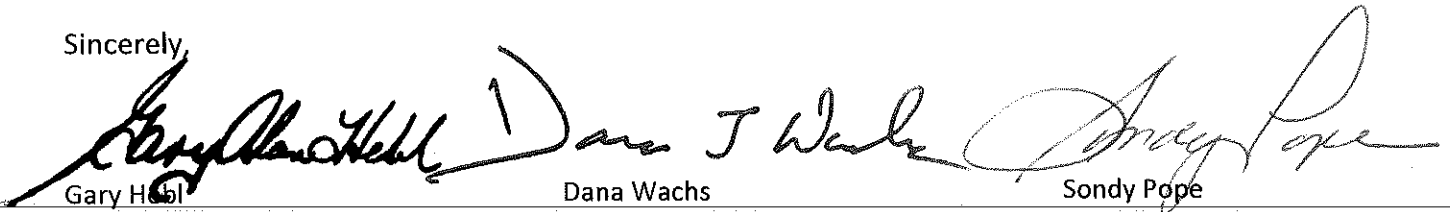
[According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau](#), in the eleven years preceding the Walker Administration, DNR sent out an average of 542 Notices of Violation per year. Since 2011, that number has dropped to 286 per year, a 47% decline. Environmental Citations issued by DNR have decreased 56%, from 361 per year to 159 per year.

Cases referred by DNR to the Department of Justice have decreased from 70 to 32 per year, a reduction of 54%. The total amount in judgments received by the Department of Justice's Environmental Protection Unit has decreased from \$5.5million/year to \$1.65 million/year, a drop of 70% that results in an approximate loss of \$3.85 million each year. That adds up to more than \$23 million dollars lost since 2011.

We also ask that you free DNR staff to give their expert opinions on how bills would affect the Department. This means allowing the Department to come out in favor of or against bills when testifying at public hearings. For the last several years, representatives of DNR have testified "for information only" and have refrained from giving the opinions of the Department as to how a bill may impact Wisconsin's environment. As legislators, we are generalists, and rely on experts to fill in gaps in our knowledge. Having a state department testify for information only gives us no meaningful information. The mission of the Wisconsin DNR is "to protect and enhance our natural resources...[and] to provide a healthy, sustainable environment." We would appreciate testimony from DNR on how a bill would affect that mission.

We hope that you return Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources back to the environmental protector that it once was. We look forward to hearing from you on this matter. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



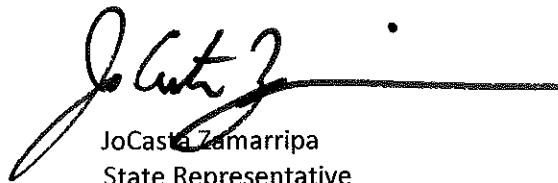
Gary Hebl
State Representative
46th Assembly District

Dana Wachs
State Representative
91st Assembly District

Sondy Pope
State Representative
80th Assembly District



Lisa Subeck
State Representative
78th Assembly District



JoCasta Zamarripa
State Representative
8th Assembly District



Chris Taylor
State Representative
76th Assembly District



Katrina Shankland
State Representative
71st Assembly District



Dave Considine
State Representative
81st Assembly District



Jimmy Anderson
State Representative
47th Assembly District



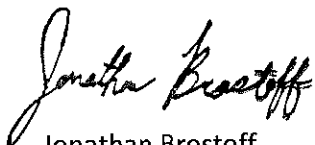
Don Vruwink
State Representative
43rd Assembly District



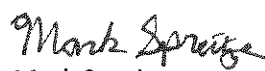
Jill Billings
State Representative
95th Assembly District



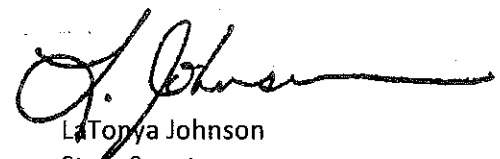
Christine Sinicki
State Representative
20th Assembly District



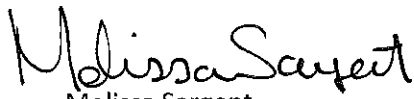
Jonathan Brostoff
State Representative
19th Assembly District




Mark Spreitzer
State Representative
45th Assembly District



LaTonya Johnson
State Senator
6th Senate District



Melissa Sargent
State Representative
48th Senate District



Mark Miller
State Senator
16th Senate District



Bob Wirch
State Senator
22nd Senate District



Tim Carpenter
State Senator
3rd Senate District