



Media Release

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## **Rep. Shankland Announces New \$10 Million Program for Remediating and Replacing Contaminated Private Wells with Governor Evers**

OCONTO/CHIPPEWA FALLS/STEVENS POINT- Today, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) will join Governor Tony Evers and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary Preston Cole at stops in Oconto, Chippewa Falls, and Stevens Point to announce the creation of a new \$10 million statewide grant program to assist with the cost of remediating or replacing private wells that are contaminated by nitrate, bacteria, and other contaminants. The new program, funded by one-time federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars, will help people across Wisconsin manage significant private well contamination and access clean water.

**Rep. Shankland, who has been working to expand access to the state's well compensation grant program since 2017, issued the following statement:**

"After years of championing water quality in the Legislature, I'm thrilled to have worked with Governor Evers to launch this new \$10 million program to help so many families across Wisconsin finally secure the resources they need to access clean water. Too many people have been searching for solutions to help them address their well contamination issues and coming up empty due to the unnecessarily prohibitive requirements of our state's existing grant program. Our new program will have a transformational impact on communities like mine across Wisconsin, funding 100% of the costs of well replacement, reconstruction, and treatment for rural families and small businesses who need and deserve support. This new clean water program shows our understanding of the gravity and urgency of the problem and our willingness to address the issue when others in the Capitol would not.

"Approximately one-quarter of Wisconsin's population drinks water that comes from our state's over 800,000 private wells, and in Portage County, about one in four private wells are unsafe to drink from due to nitrate contamination. Yet, I'm unaware of any Portage County families who have ever qualified for a grant under our state's existing program for nitrate contamination due to the outdated eligibility requirements. That's why I've been working relentlessly across the aisle through the state budget process and standalone legislation over the past six years to try to expand access to our state's well compensation grant program, and it's why today's announcement is so timely and significant.

"I've said it a thousand times— everyone deserves access to clean drinking water, and I'm committed to doing everything I can to make sure that's the reality for people in Portage County and across Wisconsin. There's no time to waste when we're talking about such a fundamental need. I look forward to seeing the real, immediate difference that our new \$10 million grant program will make, and I recognize that the work doesn't stop here. I hope that as people make use of this one-time funding, it will underscore the need for a more permanent, state-funded solution to our state's private well contamination problems. I'm as dedicated as ever to fighting for solutions, and I hope that my colleagues in the Legislature will join me next session in enacting broader eligibility criteria for the state well compensation grant program so that this support is available to those who need it for years to come."

"In the meantime, I cannot overstate how grateful I am to be with Governor Evers and Secretary Cole today to announce the launch of this exciting new \$10 million program. I encourage everyone to stay tuned and apply for the program as applications go live in the coming weeks. Here's to clean well water for Wisconsin!"

***Applications to apply for the new program will become available this fall. More information can be found on the Department of Natural Resources website [here](#). Individuals interested in receiving notifications about the program can sign up [here](#).***

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