



Media Release

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Contact: Rep. Katrina Shankland (608) 267-9649

10 Bipartisan Clean Water Bills Championed by Rep. Shankland Passed Unanimously by the State Assembly

MADISON – Today, 10 bipartisan bills that Rep. Katrina Shankland (D- Stevens Point) co-authored as Vice-Chair of the legislative Water Quality Task Force were passed unanimously by the Wisconsin State Assembly. The bills (Assembly Bills 789, 790, 791, 792, 795, 796, 797, 799, 800, and 801) represent a total investment of approximately \$10 million and reflect many of the top concerns that were highlighted during the task force’s 14 public hearings across the state.

Rep. Shankland issued the following statement in response to the bills’ passage:

“After a year of work on the Water Quality Task Force, I’m excited that the State Assembly has taken action by unanimously supporting 10 bipartisan clean water bills I coauthored. The task force traveled 2500 miles around the state, held 14 public hearings, and heard from hundreds of people. As Vice-Chair of the task force, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with our state agencies and my legislative colleagues on solutions to the water quality issues affecting people throughout Wisconsin, from nitrate to lead and PFAS to bacteria. After years of legislative inaction, it’s clear that the governor’s call to make 2019 the Year of Clean Drinking Water has given the legislature a push and has effected real change.

“Everyone should be able to drink water from the tap, and the bills we passed today will help families fix their contaminated wells and failing septic systems. We also passed my legislation to invest nearly \$1 million in UW- Stevens Point’s Center for Groundwater Science and Education for contamination mapping and analysis and to support local governments with well testing, education, and outreach. The task force bills will also assist our counties in hiring more boots-on-the-ground conservation staff and support our farmers with many conservation practices, from grazing to water quality certification, and cover crops to reducing nitrogen application. We also passed bills to clean up PFAS contamination and help kids and schools with lead contamination get clean water. Finally, we are investing in forward-looking collaboration at UW System that bolsters clean water jobs and research at campuses like UW-Stevens Point.”

“This is just the beginning. While I am proud of the initiatives we passed today, it’s urgent that we get them through the Senate and on to the governor’s desk. I call on my colleagues in the State Senate to take up these bills as soon as possible and treat them with the urgency they deserve, and I call on each and every one of my legislative colleagues to commit to continuing the conversation on Wisconsin’s water quality in future legislative sessions.

“These bills are a building block, and these conversations must continue so that we can fund the necessary resources, staff, and programs to prevent contamination from happening on the front end, while supporting people with resources to replace their lead pipes, contaminated wells, broken septic systems, and more. Our work is far from over, and I look forward to continuing to champion clean water in the legislature.”

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