

Water Quality Task Force Recommendations are Inadequate

Written by Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Ryan Billingham
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/clean-drinking-water-s5.jpg>



Group set up by Assembly Speaker Robin Vos to protect a healthy and stable water supply receives failing grade from conservationists for addressing the state's water quality crisis.

MADISON – After nearly a year of work and public input, the Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality released recommendations to address the state's water quality crisis last week that are inadequate and fail to meet the standards and expectations of voters across Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Conservation Voters issued expectations last year in its Water Quality Protection Checklist – a set of necessary actions to adequately address the water quality crisis in Wisconsin in a comprehensive manner.

The task force's recommendations represent a failing grade. Of the eight items on the checklist, only one – the endorsement of the SCHOOLS bills that will address lead contamination in schools and daycares – was fully checked off.

Others – like funding for county conservationists and updating requirements for the well compensation program – were also addressed, but not in a comprehensive way. **According to the task force's own report, it ignored the majority of the most frequently mentioned recommendations from the public.**

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“These recommendations are inadequate and will not protect the thousands of people at risk from contaminated drinking water,” said Executive Director Kerry Schumann. “Rather than solving the problems that are making our water toxic, the recommendations instead seem to be an attempt at political cover for politicians feeling the heat from their constituents.”

One of the bills actually *weakens* water protections. The task force recommended a piece of legislation, LRB 4806, drafted by polluters like the American Chemistry Council. While the legislation is designed to look innocuous, it would directly interfere with the state’s ability to make sound policy decisions based purely on data and science, while handing over influence to corporate polluters with little concern for the health and safety of Wisconsin’s families and kids.

“It is entirely unacceptable that a task force working to protect the health of our water and people would insert a proposal that would allow polluters to exact their influence over public health protections,” said Schumann.

Wisconsin Conservation Voters is hosting a [Clean Water Lobby Day on Jan. 30](#). The lobby day will allow concerned citizens from across the state to speak directly to legislators about their concerns and recommendations for addressing the water quality crisis in Wisconsin.

“Since legislators are still, even after a year of work and hours of lip service, unable to understand the gravity of Wisconsin’s drinking water crisis and are not taking meaningful action to stop it, we’ll continue to bring the faces and voices of it to their doorsteps, offices, and the ballot box,” Schumann said. “Conservation voters will not stop until every person in Wisconsin has safe drinking water.”

[Click here for more information on the Clean Water Lobby Day.](#)

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Engaging voters to protect Wisconsin's environment.

To learn more about the Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality [click here](#) .