



# MILWAUKEE DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

*Members of the Wisconsin State Assembly and the Wisconsin State Senate*

Representative Todd Novak  
Chair, Task Force on Water Quality  
310N, Wisconsin State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53703

CC: Members of the Task Force on Water Quality

Representative Novak and members of the Task Force on Water Quality:

We write today to express our concern that no meeting of the Task Force on Water Quality will take place in the City of Milwaukee. The people of Milwaukee deserve to have their voices heard on an issue that impacts nearly every aspect of daily life. Ground and well water are not the only sources of water contamination in this state. Many in the city face elevated levels of lead – a significant source of which comes from unclean water.

As you may know, the City of Milwaukee has the highest levels of lead in the water in the state of Wisconsin. In 2016, 10.8% of Milwaukee children had elevated levels of lead in their blood. The 2015 nationwide average is around 3%; the Wisconsin state average is around 5%. Flint, Michigan's average is 4.9%.<sup>1</sup> Lead piping is one of the biggest contributors to elevated lead levels – and more than 70,000 homes, businesses, and day care centers get their water through lead piping in Wisconsin's most populous city.

This is not a problem unique to Milwaukee, but it is a problem that significantly affects Milwaukee. It also disproportionately affects low-income families and children of color, who are largely unable to move to a home with safe water on a whim.

This is not the 'Year of Clean Ground and Well Water.' This is the Year of Clean Water. That means clean water for everyone in Wisconsin, regardless of how it's delivered.

The Task Force's failure to respond to the concerns of all the citizens -- or to even include representation from the City of Milwaukee -- is completely unacceptable. We urge that you reconsider, and add a public hearing in the City of Milwaukee.

Respectfully,

David C. Crowley  
Chair, Milwaukee Democratic Legislative Caucus

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, see Gerald Porter Jr., *Wisconsin's rate of lead poisoning worse than Flint, Michigan's*, THE OBSERVATORY (University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication), May 10, 2018 (available at <https://observatory.journalism.wisc.edu/2018/05/10/wisconsins-rate-of-lead-poisoning-worse-than-flint-michigans/>); and Wisconsin Department of Health Services, *2016 Report on Childhood Lead Poisoning in Wisconsin* (available at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01202-16.pdf>).



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Members of the Wisconsin State Assembly and the Wisconsin State Senate

Senator LaTonya Johnson

Senator Chris Larson

Senator Tim Carpenter

Representative JoCasta Zamarripa

Representative David Bowen

Representative Jason Fields

Representative Jonathan Brostoff

Representative Evan Goyke

Representative Christine Sinicki

Representative Robyn Vining

Representative Daniel Riemer

Representative Kalan Haywood II

Representative LaKeshia Myers

Representative Marisabel Cabrera



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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lena Taylor'.

Senator Lena Taylor