ROBERT L. COWLES
Wisconsin State Senator
2nd Senate District

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For More Information:
Contact: Senator Robert Cowles ~ (920) 660-0615

Clean Water Access Bill Passes Senate

MADISON- Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after 2017 Assembly Bill 226, authored by Senator Cowles and named the Clean Water Access Bill, was passed by the Senate on a voice vote:

"Access to clean drinking water is vital to human health. Today's action by the Senate on AB 226 provides hope to those who don't have easy access to clean drinking water. The Clean Water Access Bill is not a cure-all silver bullet, but assistance in replacing failing septic tanks and contaminated wells is an important step forward for the residents of Northeast Wisconsin.

"Drafting and passing this bill would not have been possible without the hard work and continuing dedication of my co-author Representative Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay). It was my pleasure to work with him on this important piece of legislation. Years of independent research has shown that the root cause of groundwater pollution in Kewaunee County results from a number of causes, including failing septic tanks and manure runoff. I would like to thank the bipartisan group of legislators who saw the ability of this bill to help residents of Northeast Wisconsin."

The Clean Water Access Bill increases the grant amount that may be awarded under an existing state program for rehabilitating or replacing contaminated wells. The bill also gives local governments the authority to provide low-interest or interest-free loans to the owners of contaminated wells or failing septic systems. The passage of Assembly Bill 226 will complement the DNR's revisions on Administrative Rule NR 151 and DATCP's revisions on ATCP 50 in addressing the underlying problem of water contamination in Northeast Wisconsin. Assembly Bill 226 is supported by local governments and health departments, farmers, and conservation groups. The Clean Water Access Bill now heads to the Governor for his signature.

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