

**PROPOSED FLOOR RESOLUTION BEFORE THE 2018
WI LAND+WATER BUSINESS MEETING**

**REQUEST FOR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDY TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY WHILE
SUPPORTING WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE**

WHEREAS, polluted runoff from both agricultural and urban sources, or nonpoint source pollution, continues to degrade many Wisconsin lakes, streams, rivers, and drinking water; and

WHEREAS, this pollution continues despite the 2002 promulgation of state rules, NR 151 and ATCP 50, which set forth both agricultural and urban conservation practices to mitigate the effects of nonpoint pollution; and

WHEREAS, several other state laws designed to improve coordination between point and nonpoint water pollution control efforts among municipalities to obtain the most cost-effective means of improving water quality in a watershed were enacted since 2002, but success of these efforts remain unclear; and

WHEREAS, despite the demonstrated ability of conservation practices to protect water quality and in some cases remove waters from the impaired waters list, the comprehensive and sustained statewide implementation of conservation practices has not occurred; and

WHEREAS, the multi-stakeholder 2017 Food, Land and Water report lays out the goals and strategies to achieve statewide compliance with Wisconsin's agricultural performance standards by 2035; and

WHEREAS, DNR staff have indicated before the Natural Resources Board that county Land Conservation offices do not have sufficient resources for incentives and technical assistance to help farmers implement the state's agricultural performance standards; and

WHEREAS, while tax policies have significantly reduced farm property and income taxes and improved farm profitability, there is no link between these tax policies and state agricultural nonpoint pollution performance standards, as there is with the State's Farmland Preservation Program;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wisconsin Land+Water Conservation Association begin discussions with Wisconsin's agricultural interests regarding support for implementation of NR 151 performance standards, including consideration of options to fund needed incentives, technical assistance, monitoring, and program evaluation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wisconsin Land+Water Conservation Association, upon reaching a level of mutual agreement with these agricultural interests, respectfully requests the State Legislature to complete a comprehensive Legislative Council Study evaluating state water pollution control efforts to meet state water quality standards, including the efficacy of: existing programs in implementing state agricultural nonpoint performance standards; state efforts to preserve prime farmland; connecting tax policy to state performance standards; meeting state water quality standards; providing adequate resources for farmers' incentives and related county land and water conservation technical services; effects on urban, developed, and developing areas; and support for Wisconsin's agricultural economy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Wisconsin Land+Water Association staff provide an annual report to the general Wisconsin Land and Water Association membership on an annual basis regarding the progress regarding this proposal.