

News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Representative Johnsrud and Senator Kedzie Commended for Commitment to Open Process in Drafting Groundwater Legislation**

Wausaukee—The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters has praised the excellent leadership of Representative DuWayne Johnsrud and Senator Neal Kedzie in the process of drafting legislation to protect Wisconsin's groundwater supplies.

Representative Johnsrud, Chair of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, and Senator Kedzie, Chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee, are responsible for creating the process, framing the issue, and setting the tone for this much anticipated piece of legislation, which aims to protect Wisconsin's groundwater supply by preventing aquifers from over-pumping and protecting surface waters from the adverse impacts sometimes caused by high-capacity wells.

“The approach they are using to draft groundwater legislation stands in direct contrast to the process we've witnessed in earlier weeks on the so-called Jobs Creation Act, which was drafted and negotiated behind closed doors, without the input of natural resource professionals or the public, and pushed through the legislature at an unprecedented rate. Senator Kedzie and Representative Johnsrud are to be commended for this refreshingly democratic approach to drafting natural resource legislation,” explained Kathy Pielsticker, Executive Director of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters.

The drafting process began with an initial ‘big-tent’ meeting of about 40 individuals of varying backgrounds and interests held in mid-December of last year following state-wide solicitation of comment from individuals and interest groups. From there, a subcommittee was convened, consisting of a small but broad based group of interested parties. While the discussion is limited to the subcommittee members, the meetings are open for others to observe. Once the sub-committee completes their work, a draft will be taken back to the original members of the ‘big tent.’ The process can also be followed via a public website: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen11/news/Groundwater/GROUNDWATER.htm>.

“Senator Kedzie's and Representative Johnsrud's efforts to draft critical natural resource legislation in an open and democratic way are truly commendable. Unfortunately, in today's legislative climate, such a process is becoming quite rare. We value this process and the legislators leading the effort,” concluded Pielsticker.

For more information on Wisconsin's groundwater supply, please see the *Wisconsin Conservation Briefing Book 2003-2004*, available on the web at [www.conservationvoters.org/institute](http://www.conservationvoters.org/institute).

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