Senate Vote to Reject Appointees to Wisconsin’s Natural Resources Board Puts Politics Ahead of Environment and Public Health

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Madison, WI—Today, the Wisconsin State Senate voted to reject four of Governor Tony Evers’ appointees to the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board (NRB), including the first tribal member and the first woman of color ever appointed to the board.

The rejection of four eminently qualified appointees—Sandra Dee Naas, Jim VandenBrook, Dylan Jennings, and Sharon Adams—brings a new level of partisan dysfunction to a part of government that is supposed to work for all of us.

The NRB is supposed to give citizens a voice in natural resources and conservation decision making. As an all-volunteer body that guides policy for the Department of Natural Resources, the NRB makes decisions on a wide range of important issues, including wildlife management and water quality standards, among many others.

It is discouraging that the state senate removed the first tribal member and the first woman of color ever appointed to the board. This rejection robs the state of valuable and important voices that need to be heard when the DNR is making environmental decisions that affect us all. Instead, Senate Republicans have used political litmus tests that exclude conservationists who do not agree with Senate Republicans’ narrow and increasingly out-of-touch views.

These are important issues that impact the health and wellbeing of all Wisconsinites. The kind of political gamesmanship we witnessed today is a waste of time and money that interferes with the NRB’s ability to carry out its important work on behalf of the people of Wisconsin.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a nonprofit law center that combines the power of law with the resolve of communities facing environmental injustice to secure and protect the rights of all people to healthy water, land, and air. Learn more at www.midwestadvocates.org or www.facebook.com/midwestadvocates.

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