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Ag Community Urges Senate to Act on High Capacity Well Issue

[MADISON...] A coalition of Wisconsin farmers, food processors and businesses from across the state is calling on the State Senate to pass high capacity well legislation before leaving Madison for the year.

AB 874 passed the Wisconsin State Assembly last month. The bill has been in the Senate since February 19 and is still awaiting a Senate vote. It is imperative that the Senate take action and approve this bill before they leave next Tuesday, March 15.

"The State Assembly recognized the urgency surrounding this issue when they passed AB874," said Tamas Houlihan, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association. "We urge the Senate to take action next week to support Wisconsin farmers, food processors and the entire agricultural economy."

Specifically, the coalition supports the legislation passed by the Assembly that allows existing well permit holders to repair, replace and reconstruct current, DNR- approved high capacity wells and protects farmland property values in Wisconsin. The legislation also requires a scientific study of some of the state's more sensitive surface waters to better inform future policy decisions.

"Make no mistake, this is the top priority for the state's largest industry," said Gordon Speirs, Dairy Business Association President. "The ball is in the Senate's court to pass this bill."

"We can't put off addressing this issue any longer," said Jim Holte, President of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation. "Farmers, food processors, financial lenders and manufacturers - tens of thousands of people working in every agricultural sector across Wisconsin - have their eyes on the State Senate."

Time is running out, and the State of Wisconsin's largest industry is paying attention.