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[00:00:07] **Speaker 1** I'm like, Okay. And let's do the clap, huh? Great. One thing I should tell you before we start is that I think we described this being about a five minute interview. All right, good. Well, first, I do want to say thanks very much for doing this with us.

[00:00:27] **Speaker 2** Oh, you're very welcome.

[00:00:28] **Speaker 1** So you have said that P Files contamination and mitigation is not a partizan issue. It certainly seems to have been in the recent past. But what does changed now?

[00:00:40] **Speaker 2** See, and I would disagree that it's been a partizan issue. I think there's been, you know, maybe some differences, opinions between the different parties on where the level should be set, whether it's 20 parts per trillion, 70 parts per trillion. You know, there's Canada was at one time at 120 parts per trillion. And I think the Republican stance on this is let's not get ahead of technology. I mean, you can set a fast level very, very low. But if we don't have the technology to get there, why would we do that? And I will always use the example. It was the first year I was elected. They had set P or phosphorus levels extremely low for wastewater treatment plants. It was unattainable. Most of the communities couldn't do. They didn't have the technology or didn't have the wherewithal to update to get to the levels that were originally set. So what happened is we did legislation my first term, which was a 1315 term, to soften that and give them more time to get their wastewater treatment plants updated and let technology catch up to where the levels needed to be.

[00:01:43] **Speaker 1** Do you feel as though we have more time when we're dealing with these forever chemicals?

[00:01:47] **Speaker 2** We don't have any time when we're talking about people's health, but we have to be realistic. You know, technology is moving at an accelerated rate and we need to make sure that the levels that we're setting are attainable levels.

[00:02:02] **Speaker 1** Do you have any idea what level you would think it should be?

[00:02:06] **Speaker 2** So I've heard, you know, when you talk to EPA, at first it was they were at 70 parts per trillion. And I know Wisconsin, too. And I was pushing for a levels at 20 parts per trillion. It is my understanding that EPA is now moving towards that 20 parts per trillion also.

[00:02:20] **Speaker 1** And do you agree with that?

[00:02:22] **Speaker 2** You know what? I'm going to leave that up to the scientists if if that's what science says. I agree with that.

[00:02:29] **Speaker 1** Meanwhile, in the town of Stella, residents with their private wells are seeing the highest levels of these forever chemicals anywhere across the state. And what is it? 50 households are now being given drinking water. What is your message to these people in your district?

[00:02:49] **Speaker 2** So I went to the hearing and Stella, when they had a public hearing on it and the DNR was there, Department of Health was there, and some of the wells are coming in at 46,000 parts per trillion. The saddest part about this is we don't know where it's coming from yet, but pee fast has a fingerprint. So when they can start testing these chemicals that it will have a distinct fingerprint, so to speak. And I know this is not a real good scientific explanation, but they will be able to trace it back to its source. So I think right now, I think what we're doing as far as making sure that they have clean drinking water. The Department of Health Services did make the statement that it's not absorbed through the skin. I don't know if I agree with that, but they said that you can shower with it and use it to wash your clothes and different things like that. But the questions were asked, will I have laying hens? Can I water my laying hens with it? Can I water my cattle with it? Can I water my garden with it? And at the time, Health Services Department of Health did not have answers to those questions. So I can't imagine being one of the people in the town of Stella, because, you know, this is not only your life, but now we have a decrease in property values. Everything there is, and with no answers.

[00:04:05] **Speaker 1** Can you tell the people in Stella and elsewhere across the state that the Calvary is now coming because budget writers will be able to work with more than $7 billion surplus to address PFAS contamination.

[00:04:20] **Speaker 2** So the $7 billion surplus, we're going to we're going to pause on that. Four and a half of that billion is one time money. It's not forever money. It's not like we're going to see that surplus year over year over year. Fiscal bureau estimates that the that the surplus that will be a continuing surplus is about 2.9 billion. So the large portion of this surplus is one time money. But in my world, one time as money, you know, this would be a great start for one time money. I support the governor putting 100 million in there, but I also would like to look at the programs. This is you know, when he talks about it's a, well, compensation fund and that that might not be structured perfectly for the people that are dealing with for us. We need to we need a lot more knowledge on. Where did it come from? And then how do we clean it up? Right now, if you have a well, with 46,000 parts per trillion, we do not have the capability to clean that Well, We don't have the technology yet that would actually remove the p force. So does that mean drilling a new well? Does that mean putting septic, sewer and water throughout the entire town of Stella and then maybe having high capacity well, somewhere else? I don't we don't have those answers yet. But the experts, which I am not the DNR, DHS, EPA, they're working on it.

[00:05:39] **Speaker 1** Do you believe the Republican majority and budget writers will also say that they like the $100 million that the governor is talking about?

[00:05:51] **Speaker 2** We haven't had those conversations yet, so I can't really say. But I know my colleagues are very concerned with us and that that we will address it. I can't I can't speak for everyone else about the level of commitment on that.

[00:06:07] **Speaker 1** Why shouldn't businesses that cause this contamination have to pay for the remediation?

[00:06:17] **Speaker 2** I do believe that any type of remediation will be a public private partnership, but we have a chemical that was developed, studied by the FDA and the EPA and given us stamp of approval by the government, but said this is a good chemical. Go ahead and use it. We use it in medical devices, we use it in food. We use it in waterproofing or clothing. We use firefighting foam with the Rhinelander Airport is being sued right now because they're saying that they are one of the contributors to the fast contamination. Yes, they are. But they were mandated by the FAA to utilize it and have it on hand. So are we really going to bankrupt a company that was using a government approved chemical? And told that it's safe to use. If we do that, I think they can be part of the solution, but I don't think they're the sole solution. When government tells you to go ahead and do something. Government's been giving permits recently as a summer up in the Okinawa area, Peshtigo area to put these biosolids contaminated biosolids on farm fields. Do we not play a large role in this? If let's just say use an example. If ABC paper Mill up in the Northwoods was using this and then they took their mill sludge and they spread it on farm fields. Do we want to bankrupt ABC paper mill and lose the 6 to 700 good family paying jobs because they did exactly what government told them was the right thing to do? Tough questions.

[00:07:57] **Speaker 1** With that tough question, we need to leave it. Senator, thanks very much. You bet.

[00:08:01] **Speaker 2** Thank you for having me.

[00:08:03] **Speaker 1** Senator, can we just could you just say what you said when you clapped? I think it was a stamp of approval just in case you talked over the clip. We can add it in. We would never need anything that she said when she clapped. Right. Because I was backed out of the interview.

[00:08:23] **Speaker 2** That was before the questions.

[00:08:24] **Speaker 1** I'm talking to Drew. Oh, oh, oh. I think it was a stamp of approval. Okay. So if you just see. Oh, clapping.

[00:08:31] **Speaker 2** Stamp of the if I just would say to the stamp of approval.

[00:08:35] **Speaker 1** And maybe one more.

[00:08:37] **Speaker 2** Stamp of approval.

[00:08:39] **Speaker 1** Okay, That's good. Wow. Good ears. I didn't.