



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN
EDUCATION NETWORK**

612 W. Main Street, #200
Madison, WI 53703

Phone: (608) 256-0827
lwwwisconsin@lwwwi.org

<http://www.lwwwi.org>

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To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 368

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin opposes the wetlands bill, SB 368 and companion AB 463. Wetlands play a critical role in guarding against flooding, and they provide important protections for water quality and habitat for Wisconsin's wildlife. This legislation threatens Wisconsin's critical wetland resources by:

- Allowing developers to destroy even the highest-quality, rarest, and most imperiled wetlands, as long as they purchase credits from a mitigation bank.
- Taking the science out of Department of Natural Resources decision-making. This bill requires the DNR to consider the economic impacts of a project when determining whether it will degrade or destroy a wetland, rather than basing its decisions on the impact to the natural resource. Economic impacts should not be considered by the experts whose job it is to advise about the environmental impacts.
- Limiting the DNR's review period for general permits, regardless of outdoor conditions. If DNR is not able to complete its review in 30 days, the application is automatically approved. This limits the ability of the DNR to assess the potential impact of the application under different seasonal conditions, such as snow and ice cover.
- Limiting DNR's ability to consider alternatives to wetland destruction.

These provisions are fundamental flaws for a program designed to protect wetlands. Wetlands are a key component of Wisconsin's natural heritage, and this bill fails to adequately protect wetland resources. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin urges you to oppose this bill.