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Title: Restore Natural Resource Board appointment of the DNR Secretary

The Problem:

Wisconsin DNR is charged with environmental protection and resource stewardship. These missions require a strongly independent agency, autonomous from undue political influence. The Secretary of the WDNR was traditionally appointed by the Natural Resource Board (NRB). That authority has been vested with the Governor for the last twelve years. During that period, micro-management by the Governor's office, has caused agency leadership to become timid and unreceptive to necessary change. The agency is failing to meet its charge, to the detriment of the environment, the resource, user groups, critical local initiatives, and agency reputation. Numerous political leaders, including the current governor, promised to return Secretary appointment to the NRB. So far, no one has delivered on that promise: The Legislature has made some effort: A 2008 proposal died in committee. As a result, it failed to reach the floor for a full vote- even though passage was likely. The proposal has been resurrected in the 2009 Legislative session in the form of AB 138. It was introduced into the Assembly's Natural Resource Committee on March 9, and has sixty authors and co-sponsors, in both houses. However, the Governor is now on record as supporting the continuation of the current, gubernatorial appointment. Passage of AB 138 is critical to restoration of quality resource management in Wisconsin.

The Solution:

Be it resolved by the Conservation Congress, at its annual meeting held in Sawyer County on April 13, 2009, urges Legislature and Governor to fulfill their promise to restore NRB authority to appoint the DNR Secretary. Fulfill is defined as getting AB 138 through legislative committees, onto the floor for an affirmative vote of both houses, and signed by the Governor, in this legislative session.

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Signed:  **Dated:** 04/13/2009

Sawyer County

County Code: 5802