Dear Representative/Senator **[your rep’s name],**

Since the 1950s, we have been dumping road salt on our streets, sidewalks and parking lots to melt ice and create safer traveling conditions. Deicing salt is effective when used correctly, but we have fallen into a pattern of over-applying salt in ways that have detrimental effects on wildlife, human health and the environment. Fear of liability, combined with minimal understanding of how much salt is needed, drive the overuse of this permanent pollutant.

**Say No to Oversalting and**

**Yes to Freshwater and**

**Support Senate Bill 52/Assembly Bill 61.**

Road salt inevitably ends up entering our lakes, streams and rivers through runoff and storm drains. Once road salt enters bodies of water, there is no practical way to remove it. Road salt threatens our water quality in multiple ways by contaminating drinking water, corroding pipes and leaching metals into our water. High levels of sodium are a danger to human health, especially for residents with pre-existing conditions such as high blood pressure. Chloride is toxic to aquatic life. Salt also damages vegetation and degrades soil. In addition to the environmental and health consequences, our salt use currently costs the US $16-19 billion in damages to infrastructure like roads and bridges.

A voluntary deicer certification program will provide winter maintenance professionals with common-sense, cost-effective solutions for winter maintenance that also protect fresh water. Pairing this training with limited liability protection against slip-and-falls in situations where practitioners do their due diligence is crucial. As long as the fear of lawsuits looms large in the minds of winter maintenance professional, they will default to the over-application of salt.

One more thing that could make a big difference in salt use in Wisconsin is regulating the packages that deicers come in for private consumers. Unbelievably, there is no requirement to be truthful on the packaging that rock salt and deicers come in. Packages can have labels like “eco-friendly” or “pet-friendly” when they are chloride-based products that are detrimental to gardens, pets and freshwater resources. People who have heard that rock salt is bad can be easily misled into buying products that are equally harmful to the environment. Please consider regulating how deicing salt and water softening salt is labeled in Wisconsin. Like deicing salt, all the salt that we dump into our water softeners, ends up in our lakes and streams.

Maintaining the safety of transportation conditions for our residents is a requirement, but our current norms are salt use are deteriorating our environment. By supporting smart salting training and regulating deicer labeling, you will be protecting our freshwater for generations.

Sincerely,

**[Signature]**

**[Your name]**