

THE STATE OF WISCONSIN



CITATION OF COMMENDATION

KNOW YOU BY THESE PRESENTS:

WHEREAS, Kathleen Falk has been inspired by nature since her childhood in rural Waukesha County, where she started a conservation club for local kids in the 1950s, and she has dedicated her life to tirelessly advocating for conservation, the environment, and the underserved; and

WHEREAS, Kathleen is a graduate of Stanford University and the University of Wisconsin Law School, after which she began her career as co-director and general counsel of Wisconsin's Environmental Decade (now Clean Wisconsin), litigating cases and winning groundbreaking decisions, including the seminal case on the state's environmental impact statement law; and

WHEREAS, as an Assistant Attorney General for 14 years, Kathleen served as the State Public Intervenor, one of the state's chief environmental watchdogs responsible for litigating and lobbying on an array of environmental policy areas, and she trained about 100 legal interns from the UW Law School; and

WHEREAS, Kathleen made Dane County history by becoming the first woman elected as Dane County Executive, and she served from 1997 to 2011, becoming the county's longest serving executive, during which time she made numerous outstanding and sustained contributions to conservation policy that have served as models for other communities, including the creation of the Dane County Conservation Fund, which has helped preserve over 10,000 acres of land; and

WHEREAS, some of Kathleen's other notable achievements and accolades include becoming the first woman in Wisconsin to run for governor on a major political party ticket in 2002, being appointed to President Obama's administration in 2013 as Regional Director for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the Great Lakes states and leading the coordination of health services to assist citizens in Flint, Michigan who were impacted by the drinking water crisis, and having the Falk Wells Natural Resource Area along the Sugar River named after her and her chief of staff Topf Wells; and

WHEREAS, her life's work has earned her recognition and awards from many statewide organizations, including Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, Gathering Waters Conservancy, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, WI Parks and Recreation Association, WI Women in Government, River Alliance of WI, and The Wisconsin Idea Award, and she has mentored scores of environmental advocates, graduate students, pragmatic problem solvers, policymakers, leaders, and champions; and

WHEREAS, Kathleen Falk has been named a 2022 inductee to the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame; now

THEREFORE, the members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, on the motion of Representative Katrina Shankland, do hereby honor Kathleen Falk for her outstanding service and commitment to conservation and thank her for her inspiring and dedicated leadership.

Katrina Shankland

Representative Katrina Shankland
71st Assembly District

Tuesday, April 19, 2022

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