May 15, 2019 – Introduced by Senators JACQUE, COWLES and MILLER, cosponsored by Representatives BROOKS, BRANDTJEN, KNODL, KULP, SKOWRONSKI, TUSLER and WICHGERS. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

AN ACT to repeal 299.85 (2) (b), 299.85 (2) (bm) and 299.85 (3m); to amend 299.85 (2m), 299.85 (3) (intro.), 299.85 (3) (d), 299.85 (3) (e), 299.85 (3) (em), 299.85 (7) (a) 1., 299.85 (7) (a) 2. and 299.85 (9m) (d); and to create 299.85 (8) (g) of the statutes; relating to: time limits for correcting violations found by the environmental compliance audit program.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill increases the amount of time an entity subject to environmental requirements has to correct violations found as part of the environmental compliance audit program administered by the Department of Natural Resources. The amount of time is increased from 90 days to 180 days for most violations and to 360 days if the correction involves a pollution prevention modification. This bill also eliminates the requirement that an entity notify DNR no fewer than 30 days before beginning an audit and the requirement that proposed compliance schedules be subject to a public notice and comment period.

This bill also requires DNR and the Department of Justice, in determining whether to pursue criminal enforcement action for violations revealed by a
SENATE BILL 215

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 299.85 (2) (b) of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 2. 299.85 (2) (bm) of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 3. 299.85 (2m) of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (2m) CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN VIOLATIONS. Upon the receipt of a notice under sub. (2) (b), the department shall consider whether the department of justice has, within 2 years, filed a suit to enforce an environmental requirement because of a violation involving the facility. If the department determines that, because of the nature of the violation involved in the suit, participation by the regulated entity may damage the integrity of the Environmental Compliance Audit Program, the department shall notify the regulated entity that it is not eligible for participation.

SECTION 4. 299.85 (3) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (3) AUDIT REPORT. (intro.) To participate in the Environmental Compliance Audit Program with respect to a facility, the regulated entity that owns or operates the facility shall submit a report to the department within 45 days after the date of the final written report of findings of the environmental compliance audit of the facility. The regulated entity shall complete the environmental compliance audit, including the final written report of findings, within 365 days after providing the notice under sub. (2) (b). The report submitted to the department shall include all of the following:

SECTION 5. 299.85 (3) (d) of the statutes is amended to read:
299.85 (3) (d) A commitment to correct the violations within 90 days of submitting the report, or within 360 days of submitting the report if the correction involves a pollution prevention modification, or according to a compliance schedule approved by the department.

SECTION 6. 299.85 (3) (e) of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (3) (e) If the regulated entity proposes to take more than 90 days to correct the violations, or more than 360 days if the correction involves a pollution prevention modification, a proposed compliance schedule that contains the shortest reasonable periods for correcting the violations, a statement that justifies the proposed compliance schedule, and a description of measures that the regulated entity will take to minimize the effects of the violations during the period of the compliance schedule.

SECTION 7. 299.85 (3) (em) of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (3) (em) If the regulated entity proposes to take more than 90 days to correct the violations, or more than 360 days if the correction involves a pollution prevention modification, the proposed stipulated penalties to be imposed if the regulated entity fails to comply with the compliance schedule under par. (e).

SECTION 8. 299.85 (3m) of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 9. 299.85 (7) (a) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (7) (a) 1. For at least 90 days, or at least 360 days if the correction involves a pollution prevention modification, after the department receives a report that meets the requirements in sub. (3), this state may not begin a civil action to collect forfeitures for violations that are disclosed in the report by a regulated entity that qualifies under sub. (2) for participation in the Environmental Compliance Audit Program.
SECTION 10. 299.85 (7) (a) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (7) (a) 2. Notwithstanding minimum or maximum forfeitures specified in ss. 29.314 (7), 29.334 (2), 29.604 (5) (a), 29.611 (11), 29.889 (10) (c) 2., 29.969, 29.971 (1) (a), (1m) (a), (3), (3m), (11g) (b), (11m) (b), and (11r) (b), 30.298 (1), (2), and (3), 30.49 (1) (a) and (c), 31.23 (2), 281.75 (19), 281.98 (1), 281.99 (2) (a) 1., 283.91 (2), 285.41 (7), 285.57 (5), 285.59 (8), 285.87 (1), 287.95 (1), (2) (b), and (3) (b), 287.97, 289.96 (2) and (3) (a), 291.97 (1), 292.99 (1) and (1m), 293.81, 293.87 (3) and (4) (a), 295.19 (3) (a) and (b) 1., 295.37 (2), 295.79 (2) and (4), 299.15 (4), 299.51 (5), 299.53 (4) (c) 1., 299.62 (3) (a) and (c), and 299.97 (1), if a regulated entity that qualifies under sub. (2) for participation in the Environmental Compliance Audit Program corrects violations that it discloses in a report that meets the requirements of sub. (3) within 90 180 days, or within 360 days if the correction involves a pollution prevention modification, after the department receives the report that meets the requirements of sub. (3), the regulated entity may not be required to forfeit more than $500 for each violation, regardless of the number of days during which the violation continues.

SECTION 11. 299.85 (8) (g) of the statutes is created to read:

299.85 (8) (g) That the regulated entity is a small business stationary source, as defined in 285.79 (1), that has committed a minor violation, as defined in s. 227.04 (1) (a).

SECTION 12. 299.85 (9m) (d) of the statutes is amended to read:

299.85 (9m) (d) The number of regulated entities requiring longer than 90 180 days, or longer than 360 days if the correction involves a pollution prevention
modification, to take corrective action and a description of the stipulated penalties associated with the compliance schedules for those corrective actions.

(END)