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# Wisconsin Legislative Council

## ACT MEMO

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### 2023 Wisconsin Act 32 [2023 Assembly Bill 131]

### Membership in County Land Conservation Committees

Wisconsin law requires each county to create a land conservation committee. Among other responsibilities set forth in the statutes or delegated by a county board, county land conservation committees may adopt standards for land management practices, distribute funds, and carry out projects. [ss. 92.06 (1) (a) and 92.07, Stats.] County boards must appoint land conservation committee members who fulfill certain statutory criteria. [s. 92.06 (2), Stats.]

**Prior law** required one of the members of a county land conservation committee to be the chair of the county's farm service agency (FSA), or the FSA chair's designee. However, a November 2021 letter from the U.S. Department of Agriculture advised Wisconsin's state FSA office that the service of an FSA member on a county land conservation committee likely violates federal ethics laws.

**2023 Wisconsin Act 32** removes the requirement to appoint one member to a county land conservation committee who is the county's FSA chair or the FSA chair's designee. Instead, the act requires a county board to appoint one member to the county's land conservation committee who is a person "engaged in an agricultural use." For purposes of the act, a person who is "engaged in an agricultural use" means a person who conducts any of the following activities for the purpose of producing an income or livelihood: crop or forage production; keeping livestock; beekeeping; nursery, sod, or Christmas tree production; floriculture; aquaculture; fur farming; or forest management.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2023

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature's [bill history page](#).

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