



# TREIG E. PRONSCHINSKE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 92<sup>nd</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Release:  
March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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## **Expanding Psychiatric Beds in Wisconsin**

Our region is in desperate need of expanding capacity for psychiatric beds, Assembly Bill 443 and its companion, Senate Bill 405, do exactly that. This piece of legislation awards a grant of \$15,000,000 between Sacred Heart Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital for the purpose of expanding the psychiatric bed capacity by approximately 22 beds.

On February 18<sup>th</sup>, colleagues from both sides of the aisle and I passed Assembly Bill 443 unanimously. I am proud of the wide support that has been received for this bill because it affects not only our rural communities in Western Wisconsin, but statewide.

There are numerous organizations that are in full support of this piece of legislation including the Badger State Sheriffs' Association, Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association Inc., Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

I have personally spoken with many individuals in our area that have expressed their support. It is very important to our law enforcement personnel statewide to expand the psychiatric bed capacity so that they are not traveling for hours to Mendota or Winnebago with these individuals that are in need. When they do this they are leaving our local communities without a law enforcement presence. Additionally, there will be a roughly \$2.7 million savings statewide from reduced travel and daily rate fees annually.

As we are moving towards the end of session, it is vital that the senate take this up as soon as possible. On February 25<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services passed the bill out of committee unanimously, so putting it the floor for a vote in their house is the next step.

Once Assembly Bill 443 passes the Senate floor session, it is off to Governor Evers' desk where he has commented that he is going to sign this bill. Finally, the Building Commission does have to review and accept the request to finalize this process.

As always, feel free to contact my office with questions, comments, or concerns.

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