



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 30, 2011

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Rep. Samantha Kerkman (608) 266-2530

Rep. Robin Vos (608) 266-9171

Sen. Van Wanggaard (608) 266-1832

Rep. Vos, Rep. Kerkman, Sen. Wanggaard: Union Grove Veterans Home Operations Under Scrutiny

MADISON...Rep. Robin Vos (R-Rochester), Rep. Samantha Kerkman (R-Randall) and Sen. Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) are closely monitoring the proposed changes at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove following an audit that revealed inadequate oversight as well as major financial and program management issues.

“The results of the audit are absolutely not acceptable,” said Sen. Wanggaard. “We don’t need excuses, we need problem-solving actions to take care of the veterans who served us and continue to serve us.”

“We must ensure that our veterans are getting the quality care that they deserve,” said Rep. Vos. “The audit only solidified the need for a business plan and central oversight so the facility can stay open and tax dollars aren’t being wasted.”

The Joint Legislative Audit Committee today heard testimony from Wisconsin Veterans Affairs Secretary Kenneth Black about improvements to Wisconsin Veterans Homes. Secretary Black, who is resigning from office this week, says the department is moving forward on a reorganization plan which maps out specific steps to operate more efficiently and achieve financial solvency. The plan includes strengthening financial oversight, creating a centralized management team and repurposing Gates Hall at Union Grove Veterans Home to a licensed, skilled nursing facility.

“Between the report prepared by the Legislative Audit Bureau and the testimony provided by Secretary Black, we now have an idea as to the challenges confronting our veterans’ homes, including the facility in Union Grove,” said Rep. Kerkman, co-chair of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. “I am hopeful that in working with the Department of Veterans Affairs, we’ll be able to change things for the better at Union Grove and ensure the best care possible for the veterans residing there.”

The Department of Veterans Affairs must report back to the audit committee about management and program improvements by July 1st.