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Federal Funds Directed to Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County

MADISON – Wisconsin’s Department of Administration announced its intent to direct a federally funded \$4 million grant award to the Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County (MHLC). The funds were provided through the Federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. MHLC is the only county owned hospital remaining in the state of Wisconsin. It was originally constructed in 1952 and has nearly 150 employees and serves over 16,600 county residents.

Last year on June 8th, Rep. Todd Novak and Rep. Travis Tranel introduced Assembly Bill 390, a bill calling for the same federal funds to be directed to MHLC. Rep. Novak and members from the hospital came before a legislative committee to explain the urgent need for the funding in order to make infrastructure improvements to the hospital and to respond to the negative economic impacts from the pandemic. Lafayette County has been discussing deficiencies in their current building for several years. The bill passed the full Assembly shortly after the committee hearing.

“The pandemic has hit rural areas particularly hard and access to care in a hospital setting oftentimes can be several towns away. Adding to this challenge, MHLC’s building is aging and critical components like the HVAC system need to be updated.” said Rep. Novak. “Recognizing this need, I introduced legislation last year to surge federal funding to MHLC.”

Assembly Bill 390 was quickly moving through the legislative process when the state announced a Healthcare Infrastructure Capital Grant Program last fall. Since the announcement of the grant program over six months have passed and the hospital has just now been selected to receive a \$4 million grant.

“I am glad to see the funding for the hospital finally come through. It is just disheartening sometimes to see how slowly the Administration moves when distributing pandemic relief aid.” said Novak. “The funding will go a long way toward improving the infrastructure at MHLC, which down the road will translate into better health outcomes for individuals across Southwest Wisconsin.”

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