



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Reps. Schraa and Born Respond to Findings of WCI Death Investigations

Legislators Highlight Failed Evers Administration Leadership, Call for Better Oversight at State Prisons

Dodge County, WI – Representative Michael Schraa (R-Oshkosh), Chair of the Assembly Committee on Corrections, and Representative Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam), Co-Chair of the state’s budget-writing committee, responded Wednesday to the findings of Dodge County Sheriff Dale Schmidt’s investigations into four deaths at Waupun Correctional Institution. Following the Sheriff’s press conference releasing the findings, Representatives Born and Schraa made this statement:

“The conclusions released from this investigation are incredibly troubling. These findings highlight the lack of leadership by Governor Tony Evers and the state Department of Corrections to protect the basic safety and constitutional rights of inmates in our state.

“We recognize some of the challenges facing our correctional facilities, in part due to ongoing staff shortages. It’s why we championed the efforts in the most recent state budget to increase wages for security staff at state prisons, which have been successful in reducing vacancies and increasing recruitment for correctional officer positions. But it is clear from these investigations the challenges within our corrections system go much deeper and there must be stronger accountability to ensure facilities are complying with the law and that the constitutional rights of those incarcerated are upheld.

“We fear the issues brought to light from this investigation are pervasive, and the legislative committees will be looking further into the problems caused by the lack of leadership by the Evers Administration to better understand the wholeness of the situation.

“These deaths – and the issues that have caused an ongoing federal investigation into WCI – call for better accountability in our state prison system, similar to the statutorily required oversight that occurs in our county jails. Our offices will spend the coming days and months working with stakeholders to explore options for creating more transparency and accountability in our state correctional facilities.”