

The Nass Report



Wisconsin State Government and the 11th Senate District

October 14, 2020

Evers' DHS Communicable Disease Bureau Director Has No Medical or Scientific Degree

Director has degrees in Art Teacher Education and Homeland Security Studies

Senator Steve Nass (R-Whitewater) today raised serious questions regarding the leadership of the two key units in the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) responsible for the state's response to Covid-19. Stephanie Smiley currently holds two key positions: (1) Director, Bureau of Communicable Diseases and (2) Interim Administrator of the Division of Public Health. Governor Evers has repeatedly told the public that his administration is "following the science" and relying on experts.

However, the person in charge of the state's daily fight against Covid-19 has no medical or scientific training or degrees. Stephanie Smiley, publicly lists two degrees: Bachelor of Science in Art Teacher Education from UW-Madison and a Master of Arts in Homeland Security Studies from the Naval Postgraduate School. Prior to her current roles at DHS, Ms. Smiley had previously held the position of Communications Director for DHS.

"Governor Evers and DHS Secretary-Designee Palm need to answer serious questions regarding the personnel at DHS serving in vital roles without the appropriate education, training or experience. Ms. Smiley leads the Communicable Diseases Bureau but has no education, training or experiences that would seem to make her qualified to serve in that role. She is also serving as the overall Administrator for the Division of Public Health and clearly lacks any known basis for serving in that role, as well," Nass said.

Nass noted that the DHS provides the following description of the duties and responsibility for the DHS Bureau of Communicable Diseases:

Promotes efforts to prevent and control communicable diseases among Wisconsin citizens. Implements surveillance, control, and prevention measures; assists local health departments, health care providers, and citizens to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases; maintains a statewide surveillance system; assists in early identification and intervention of communicable diseases; and informs the public about ways to prevent and control communicable diseases.

Senator Nass has asked DHS to provide greater details regarding Ms. Smiley's background and the job descriptions and requirements that the Evers Administration is using for these critical positions.

Sen. Steve Nass
State Capitol, Room 10 South
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707
Toll-Free (800) 578-1457 or (608) 266-2635
Sen.Nass@legis.wi.gov | [Website](#) | |