



Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

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CONTACT: Van Wanggaard

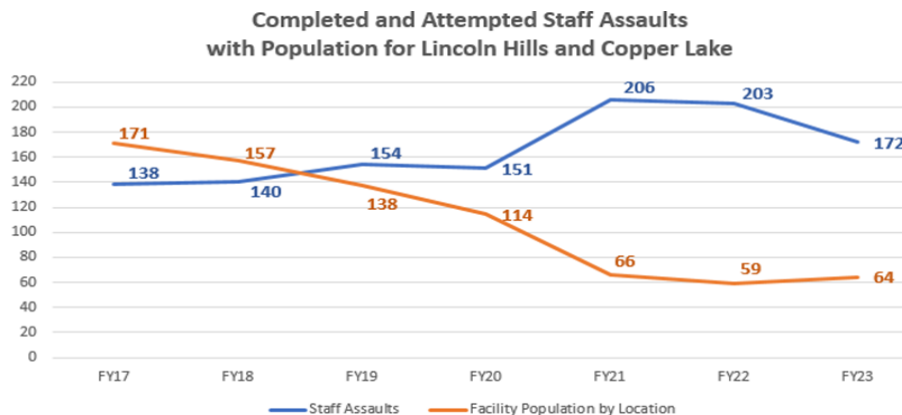
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EVERS' LETTER IGNORES FACTS, BLAMES STAFF INSTEAD OF HIS POLICIES Says Consent Decree Improves Safety Despite Increased Staff Assaults

Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety is criticizing Governor Evers' letter to US District Court Judge James Peterson asking him to not revise the consent decree governing the Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake Schools. Evers' letter contains many misstatements of fact and troubling admissions of failed policies and misplaced priorities at Lincoln Hills.

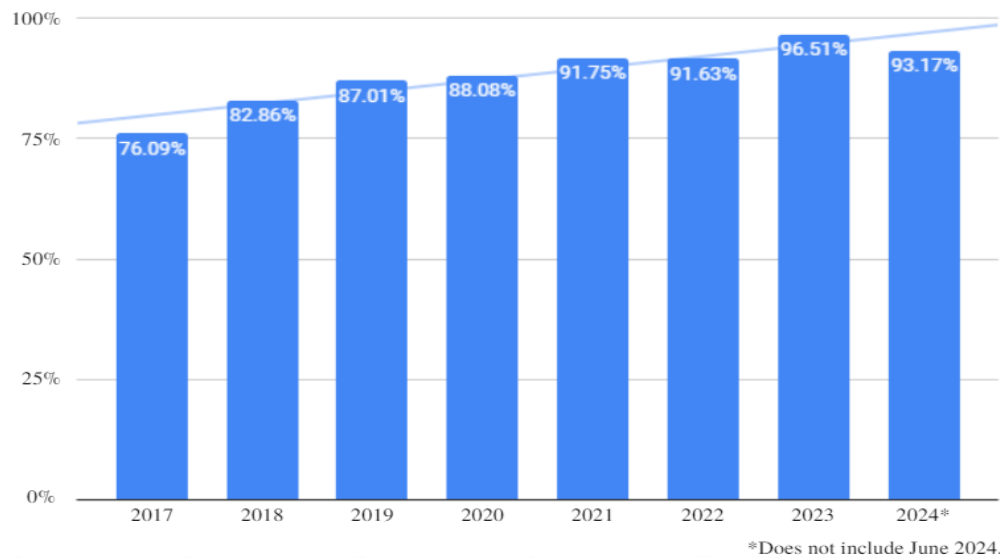
"I do not know if Governor Evers' letter was spin, wishful thinking or gaslighting," said Senator Wanggaard. "But I do know a lot of it was untrue. What is certain is that Evers Administration policies implementing the consent decree make Lincoln Hills unsafe for inmates and staff."

On Friday afternoon, Wanggaard sent a [letter](#) to Judge Peterson correcting some of the factual errors contained in Governor Evers' letter. Perhaps the most misleading statement of Evers' letter was that the consent decree "helps keep our staff safe." According to the Department of Corrections own data, assaults on staff increased 47% since the consent decree went into effect and the Evers Administration took control of Lincoln Hills, and assaults were more likely to be successful, despite a dramatic reduction in the number of inmates.



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Percent of Completed Staff Assaults



Evers' letter also highlights how his own Administration's policies, beyond the consent decree, are contributing to staff safety issues. According to Evers' letter, "...following [Youth Counselor] Corey [Proulx]'s death, DOC has been able to use restraints, administrative confinement and referrals to MJTC...to address those who pose a threat of harm to themselves or staff."

"This explains the confusion at the Committee hearing about whether or not staff could handcuff inmates," said Wanggaard. "Current and former staff were shocked to hear they could do so, as they had been told by the Department of Corrections they could not. It's clearly not blocked by the consent decree, or it wouldn't be allowed now. Just the idea that they thought they couldn't handcuff inmates emphasizes the need to change Administration policy."

Wanggaard was also troubled that the Evers Administration is apparently investigating staff in the wake of Corey Proulx's death. According to Evers' letter, "DOC will continue their investigation into Corey's death to...determine if any policies and procedures were violated."

"Let me get this straight," Wanggaard said. "Their co-worker was killed in an assault by an inmate. And the Evers' Administration is investigating the staff for violations of policies? No wonder staff feels like they have a target on their back."

"Governor Evers should be determining if his policies and procedures contributed to the attack, not blaming staff for the death of a co-worker," Wanggaard said. "It's so symbolic of how Evers operates. It couldn't be his policies that are the issue. When it comes to crime and prisons, Governor Evers thinks that if you ignore the problem, it will go away. It doesn't work that way. When you ignore a problem, it only gets bigger. Wisconsin can't afford that."