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EVERS ADMINISTRATION ADMITS NO PLAN TO CLOSE LINCOLN HILLS Admission Comes During Hearing on Juvenile Correction Rules

MADISON – Six years after the law to close Lincoln Hills was enacted, the Department of Corrections (DOC) revealed today that the opening of the new juvenile prison on Milwaukee’s north side will NOT lead to the closure of Lincoln Hills. The concerning news came during a hearing about proposed administrative rules for youth prisons, known as “Type 1 facilities”.

“The Evers Administration has had six years to come up with a plan to close Lincoln Hills,” said Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine). [“In 2019, when Governor Evers proposed to “indefinitely delay” the closure of Lincoln Hills, it was soundly rejected.](#) Today, they casually admitted their ‘math doesn’t work’ with the opening of the new facility in Milwaukee, and that there is no plan to close Lincoln Hills anytime in the immediate near future.”

Under 2018 Act 185, Lincoln Hills was required to be closed by 2021. The Evers Administration did not announce the construction of the new 32-bed Type 1 Facility in Milwaukee until 2023, with its potential opening in 2026. The opening of the new facility will still leave Wisconsin around 20 beds short for Serious Juvenile Offenders, which DOC stated will require Lincoln Hills to stay open for the foreseeable future.

“This continues Evers’ “I don’t have a clue” approach to corrections,” Wanggaard said. “The law requires Lincoln Hills to close, but Evers has just ignored it. Everyone knows the Green Bay Correctional (GBCI) and Waupun prisons need to be replaced, but Evers continues to drag his feet. Ignoring these issues doesn’t make them go away, it makes them worse.”

“Governor Evers needs to present a game plan for Juvenile and Adult Corrections, and mass amnesty and letting people out isn’t the solution. There needs to be a concrete plan to close Lincoln Hills as a juvenile facility as the law required – three years ago. When crimes are committed, there needs to be consequences,” said Wanggaard. “So what do you think? Isn’t six years long enough to come up with a game plan? And that also includes a plan to replace GBCI and Waupun. No one likes to build prisons, but leadership means sometimes doing things you may not like to do.”

Senator Wanggaard was the lead Senate author of the 2017 Act 185, which passed the Legislature unanimously.

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