



CALVIN CALLAHAN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 35

(608) 266-7694
Toll-Free (888) 534-0035

Rep.Callahan@legis.wi.gov
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

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Contact: Rep. Calvin Callahan

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(608) 266-7694

Rep. Callahan Praises JFC Action Taken Towards Closing Lincoln Hills

Joint Finance Committee approves funding for Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center expansion

[Madison, WI] – Today, the Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) took its first votes on the unworkable, unrealistic, and unsustainable state budget proposal that Governor Evers sent to the Legislature. The governor’s liberal wish list would not only be the largest increase in spending in nearly 20 years, but also proposes over \$1 billion in tax increases on Wisconsin businesses and families. As the JFC began the process of removing the governor’s hundreds of divisive policy items he’s included, they also approved funding for an expansion of the Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center (MJTC).

The MJTC is a Type 1 juvenile correctional facility that provides psychiatric evaluation and treatment for male juveniles transferred from the juvenile correctional system whose behavior is highly disruptive and who have not responded to standard services and treatment at Lincoln Hills. Currently, there are 29 staffed beds in single-occupancy secure rooms at MJTC, with no beds for females.

“I’ve spoken with Department of Corrections (DOC) officials and I’ve heard straight from the folks who work at Lincoln Hills,” stated Rep. Callahan. “It is blatantly clear that steps need to be taken to close this facility.”

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), in response to [2017 Act 185](#), proposed adding a total of 64 beds, including 14 beds utilizing existing space in MJTC and 50 beds in a new addition to the building. This 50-bed building addition would include two units for males with a total of 30 beds and two units for females with a total of 20 beds. The treatment at this facility addresses substance abuse, sexual offense, and mental illness, provides academic support, and includes therapy for anger management.

“The MJTC expansion will allow more of Wisconsin’s most troubled children to obtain the treatment and care they need to become a contributing member of society,” continued Rep. Callahan. “We need to ensure the safety of the Lincoln Hills staff, and make sure the goal of Act 185, reformation of our juvenile justice system, is achieved.”

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The 35th Assembly District includes all of Lincoln County and portions of Langlade, Marathon, Oneida, and Shawano Counties.