



# John Nygren

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 89<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Governor Evers' Failure to Follow State Law Costs Taxpayers

**Madison**—The Assembly Chair of the Joint Finance Committee Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette) released the following statement:

“It took a lawsuit to make it happen, but 10 months after breaking the state’s open records law, Governor Evers has finally fulfilled my request for public records about farmer mental health and his request for public funds,” said Rep. Nygren. “While Governor Evers initially denied my request and needed a lawsuit to prompt compliance, his own agency, DATCP, fulfilled the same request with no complaints and in a timely fashion.”

“The entire lawsuit could have been avoided, saving taxpayer resources, had Governor Evers simply fulfilled the original request or worked with me to address concerns,” said Rep. Nygren. “Instead, he claimed the request was too burdensome and denied it outright.”

“It is curious that, within days, Governor Evers and his staff fulfilled a records request for a secret audio recording of a meeting with Legislative leadership,” said Rep. Nygren. “But when it came to turning over records related to business before the Legislature, Governor Evers was suddenly incapable of following state law.”

In July of 2019, the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) requested the release of funds from the Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) for counseling vouchers for farmers. In response, the Co-Chairs of JFC informed DATCP that it needed to work with the Speaker’s Task Force on Suicide Prevention and answer important questions raised by task force members about program operations and transparency. Instead, DATCP, at the direction of the Governor’s office, attacked JFC claiming insufficient funds existed at DATCP for farmer mental health and withheld information from the Legislature.

Seeking the truth, Rep. Nygren requested records from DATCP and the Governor’s office related to farmer mental health over a one month period. DATCP fulfilled the request but the Governor’s office denied the request. The petition filed in November by Rep. Nygren sought to have the court require Governor Evers and his staff turn over public records related to the original records request.

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