



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**JESSE JAMES**

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For Immediate Release

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State Representative Jesse James

**Rep. Jesse James Celebrates Funding Released for Mental Health Beds in Chippewa Valley**

(Madison)... Earlier today, the Wisconsin State Building Commission voted unanimously to release funding for the expansion of mental health treatment beds in the Chippewa Valley. This project was included in the State Budget passed by the Legislature this June but like all building-related projects also had to be formally approved by the Building Commission.

“We are blessed to have God leading this effort,” Representative James said. “The nuns in Springfield, Illinois heard from God that they needed this partnership for the mental health need ravaging North Central Wisconsin and had the foresight to act on it. They were obedient to His word, and this relationship is a win-win for Wisconsin.”

This approval allows Sacred Heart Hospital and St. Joseph’s Hospital to add 22 new mental health beds for teens and adults. These beds will expand existing units, creating a 33-bed adult unit at HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire and a dedicated 18-bed adolescent unit at HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital in Chippewa Falls. This expansion will help to serve the residents of 29 counties in northern, western and central Wisconsin.

Representative James added, “We are thankful to have a champion Senator leading this charge. We are also thankful that the Governor has seen the light and that this project is coming to fruition.”

For years, Sen. Bernier and Rep. James have heard from local officials, law enforcement members, and families about the difficulty of transporting individuals from northern and western Wisconsin to the state’s only mental health facility near Oshkosh. This project will reduce the strain of a long commute while also ensuring that patients are closer to their communities and families.

Rep. James concluded, “Not only does this development meet the mental health needs of Wisconsinites, but it also saves our state and taxpayers money! Additionally, it is always an honor for me to assist our law enforcement officers and help them to do their jobs as effectively as possible.”