

Hansen Joins Call for Corrections Reform

Written by GBP Staff

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Popular local Senator will join Sen. Erpenbach at Green Bay area press conference on Thursday to announce new Corrections legislation.

MADISON - State Senator **Dave Hansen** (D-Green Bay) joined calls for reforming the Department of Corrections today and to announce his support for legislation that will address staffing and safety issues at Wisconsin Correctional Institutions.



“Safety within our corrections institutions should be a top priority in light of the growing number of incidents we have seen take place, in large part due to the inability of Corrections officials to recruit, properly train and retain staff,” said Hansen, noting that 500 positions are currently unfilled in the department putting public safety at risk. “As a result we are asking fewer officers to take on more shifts and more responsibility to the point that it is putting their safety at risk.”



Hansen also announced that he will join State Senator **Jon Erpenbach** (D-Middleton) and corrections officers at a press conference at the Brown County Courthouse at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 7th to discuss the growing crisis in Corrections and to announce his support for a package of bills being introduced by Sen. Erpenbach.

Included in the reform package are bills aimed at improving community safety, increasing officer and staff training, limiting consecutive overtime shifts, requiring public access to incident reports, making workplace safety a subject of collective bargaining, and prohibiting DOC from enacting policies that are detrimental to staff recruitment, retention and safety.

“We can no longer afford to ignore the growing crisis inside the Department of Corrections.

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Reforming the department should be a top priority for both parties before the end of the current legislative session. These bills represent an effort to begin the discussion about how best to address the issues that have resulted from the growing staff shortage at Corrections. Ultimately, however, this is not a partisan issue, but one that we can and should work together to address.”

The proposals include four weeks of on the job training for new recruits, training for officers that dispense medicine, requiring first responder units to be fully staffed at every shift for back up, requiring at least one guard tower and one perimeter be staffed during every shift, making workplace safety a subject of collective bargaining, limiting the number of consecutive shifts of overtime allowed to two and making incident reports public.

Legislative staffer Jay Wadd contributed to this story.