

Neglect Ignored, Problems Denied at King Veteran Home

Written by Wisconsin Senate Democrats

Thursday, 01 September 2016 15:45 - Last Updated Friday, 09 September 2016 10:25



GOP inaction once again jeopardizes vulnerable residents at state facility.

MADISON – A troubling pattern of Republican inaction exposed by investigative reporters is once again raising questions about the handling of staff shortages, whistleblower complaints and reports of neglect at state facilities. Despite Democratic calls for action over the past several years, Republican leaders were slow to act until it became clear that The Cap Times and other media outlets were planning to expose numerous tragic reports of veteran neglect and understaffing at the King Veteran Home.



“We’ve seen a troubling pattern of inaction from legislative Republicans and the Walker administration every time serious concerns are raised about mismanagement, understaffing and neglect at state facilities,” said Sen. **Jennifer Shilling** (D-La Crosse). “From day one, Republicans have been more focused on boosting Gov. Walker’s presidential ambitions than addressing tragic reports of veteran neglect at King, mistreatment of children at Lincoln Hills and understaffing at correctional facilities.”

Democrats, including Sen. **Julie Lassa** (D-Stevens Point), tried for years to get the attention of Gov. Walker, legislative Republicans, and state officials. Senators

Jon Erpenbach

(D-Middleton) and

Lena Taylor

(D-Milwaukee) raised concerns about the King nursing home in March 2015, and Democratic requests for an audit of King in 2015 were rejected by Legislative Republicans because it wasn’t a “priority at the moment.” While Sen.

Luther Olsen

(R-Ripon) admitted he “had heard concerns about staffing at King throughout his 12--year tenure,” he failed to call for an audit until just days prior to The Cap Times report.

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“I’m glad people are finally paying attention to this crisis, but waiting another nine months for an audit would represent another failure of leadership from the Walker administration,” said Shilling. “We need an immediate, impartial investigation into whistleblower complaints and a commitment from Republican leaders that they will not follow through with their plan to raid \$18 million from our veteran nursing homes.”