

Democratic Radio - "Correcting Corrections"

Written by Wisconsin Assembly Democrats
Thursday, 03 March 2016 10:27 -



MADISON - Today Rep. **Dave Considine** (D-Baraboo) offered the Democratic Weekly Radio Address. The topic this week is the serious ongoing problems at the state Department of Corrections and Democratic efforts to solve them.



"The Walker Administration and some Republican legislators have known about these problems for a long time but have neglected to take any meaningful action to solve them," Rep. Considine said. "We need to support and protect our hardworking corrections officers and staff, as well as our inmates. And we need to work to bring all members of our Wisconsin community together and build a more productive and safe society."

The audio file of this week's address can be found [here](#) and a video version can be viewed [here](#) or below.

Published on Mar 2, 2016.

A written transcript of the address is below:

For months, we have been hearing about severe health and safety concerns at our state correctional institutions.

In my own district at Columbia Correctional Institution, unprecedented staff vacancy levels

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have resulted in dangerous conditions for officers, inmates and our communities. At juvenile facilities such as Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake, there have been reports of horrific abuse and violence dating back several years, with the FBI now leading an investigation into these issues.

I have worked with several of my fellow legislators – as well as current and former Wisconsin correctional officers – to introduce legislation that will bring desperately needed improvements to Wisconsin's correctional system. These reforms for officers include four weeks of on-the-job training for new recruits, allowing workers to collectively bargain for workplace safety, limiting consecutive overtime shifts and requiring incident reports to be made public.

My fellow Democratic lawmakers and I have also called for an audit of the Department of Corrections to address these very serious problems and find solutions both for our state employees and the inmates they supervise.

The Walker Administration and some Republican legislators have known about these problems for a long time but have neglected to take any meaningful action to solve them. They have even refused to hold a hearing about juveniles being abused at our state facilities.

We all need and deserve to know the truth. The secrecy, denial and incompetence must end. It is time for us to work together and bring real change to our correctional facilities.

We need to support and protect our hardworking corrections officers and staff, as well as our inmates. And we need to work to bring all members of our Wisconsin community together and build a more productive and safe society.