

Rep. Shankland: Statement on audit of King Veterans Home

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MADISON – The non-partisan Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) released an audit of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King today, prompted by investigative reporting and legislative concerns about the conditions at King.

The LAB audit found that while care needs of residents have increased dramatically, the Veterans Home at King has maintained a high staff vacancy rate, leading to a dramatic upturn in overtime hours worked in recent years. In an anonymous survey of King staff, 75.1% characterized employee morale as being “poor” or “very poor.” These findings are in stark contrast to the claims of DVA Secretary Dan Zimmerman, who testified before the legislature’s Joint Finance Committee that [“morale is not low.”](#)

In response, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) released the following statement:

“After years of calls for investigations into the management and staffing practices at King, I’m pleased that the legislature now has this independent report available to us. The nonpartisan audit bureau’s findings of high staff vacancy rates and forced overtime confirms what we have heard many times from employees on the ground. The harm that chronic understaffing is doing to staff morale and quality of care at King Veterans Home can no longer be ignored. I hope the legislature can work together to fix these concerns.

“Democratic legislators have introduced a plan to address the issues at King head-

on, including raising staff pay to fill vacancies and lower turnover and provide a hotline for anonymous complaints. The concepts behind many of our proposals are reflected in the recommendations made by the audit bureau today. While Republican legislators rejected our common-sense motions for King in the budget, I hope they will work with us to move these ideas forward now. The audit makes clear that the challenges at King Veterans Home aren't going away."