

# Rep. Steffen: Prison Study Committee Begins its Work

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 20, 2017

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*Future of GBCI and Wisconsin's prisons statewide to be evaluated*

Madison- Today, the Corrections Facilities Planning Committee, a committee created in the 2017-19 biennial budget and charged with the task of studying the needs of Wisconsin's prison facilities, including the Green Bay Correctional Institution (GBCI), held its initial meeting at the Department of Corrections training center. The fifteen member committee is being led by the Department of Corrections Secretary, Jon Litscher and is composed of a total of four Wisconsin state cabinet secretaries, six members of the legislature, and other individuals with backgrounds relating to the state corrections system.

"I am very eager to begin working within my new capacity as a member of this committee. I have worked tirelessly this session on the issue of prison facility needs, specifically at Green Bay Correctional Institution. I look forward to continuing this conversation and ensuring that the GBCI proposal I've worked on this session remains a top concept for consideration throughout this process," said Rep. Steffen.

Today's meeting focused primarily on educating members as to the current conditions and issues facing Wisconsin's prison facilities, including capacity needs, conditions of aging facilities, and workforce and healthcare needs. Additionally the committee developed and approved a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Committee Consultant who will be responsible for conducting the analysis of all correctional institutions and centers and providing the Committee with recommendations to resolve facility needs statewide.

A key part of the RFP is a requirement for a review of the partnership facility concept proposed by Rep. Steffen. In Rep. Steffen's proposal (Assembly Bill 292), a

public-private partnership would be utilized to enable the decommissioning of GBCI and construction of a new, modern facility in Northeast Wisconsin.

“I am thankful that the public-private partnership facility concept option, which was a part of my proposal for GBCI, will be a core part of the RFP. This will provide additional details and data for the state to consider in regards to innovative and cost-saving options available in the corrections world.

“I am very optimistic about the outlook of this Committee. I believe, based on today’s discussions, this will be a productive and collaborative effort which will provide our state with the tools and information it needs in order to implement real, meaningful solutions to many of the issues currently impacting Wisconsin’s prisons,” said Rep. Steffen.