

Sen. Hansen: To introduce bill to provide more permanent funding for Veterans Trust Fund

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Madison, Wisconsin — State Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) announced today that he is introducing legislation to eliminate a controversial tax loophole that has resulted in 11 individuals who make over \$30 million per year getting an annual total tax giveaway of \$22 million. The savings from eliminating the loophole would then be used to provide a more permanent funding source for the Veterans Trust Fund.

“By creating a more permanent source of funding for the Veterans Trust Fund we can eliminate the need to transfer funds from our veterans homes that would be better spent making sure the veterans who live in them receive the best treatment and care possible,” said Hansen.

An audit found that between 2003 and 2016, \$55 million was transferred from King Veterans Home to help shore up the Veterans Trust Fund and to support other state veterans homes. The budget recently passed by legislative Republicans and signed by Governor Walker continues this practice by transferring another \$18.5 million from the operating budgets of the state’s veterans homes.

“It doesn’t matter whose watch this happened on. It happened under both political parties and the practice needs to stop.”

The audit came after numerous accounts of deteriorating quality of care at the state’s veterans home due to a lack of proper staffing levels and a failure to properly maintain the homes. Last year the Capital Times reported “urine-soaked carpets, disabled residents who are bathed only once per week, mold on the walls, outdated medical equipment and residents being cleaned with dirty washcloths

placed in the drain of a soiled sink.”

“I can’t imagine any one of these 11 very well-off, patriotic Americans not agreeing to forego their \$2 million tax giveaway in order to make sure our veterans at these state homes are receiving the best care and quality of life possible,” Hansen said. “It’s not like these 11 people need the money.”

Senator Hansen said he hopes the bill receives bi-partisan support, “I know we all care about our veterans. This is a way to make sure they receive the care they need and deserve for years to come.”