

Sen. Cowles, Rep. Steffen: State legislators call for action to replace Green Bay Correctional Institution

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Madison- On Wednesday, Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Representative David Steffen (R-Green Bay) reiterated the need for a modern facility to replace the 121-year old maximum security facility in Allouez. Constructed in 1898, Green Bay Correctional Institution (GBCI) was built with a capacity to house 749 inmates, however it currently houses approximately 1,090 inmates.

“I have consistently stated that Green Bay Correctional Institution is the most dangerous place in Wisconsin,” stated Rep. Steffen. “The current infrastructure is failing and requires constant upkeep and renovations which has resulted in significant cost and overcrowding concerns. The current facility presents a major security and safety risk to both staff and inmates.”

Earlier today, Governor Evers stated that he will not be allocating money in his budget to build a new prison in Green Bay, but noted that the existing facility will be difficult to continue to use due to its age and inadequacy. He implied that he is open to discussing the issue outside the budget process.

“The Green Bay Correctional Institution (GBCI) has served the state of Wisconsin exceptionally well for over 100 years, but it is time to move on. A new facility brings assurance that state of the art technology and design will ease the stress placed on our correctional officers currently operating the facility. The Institution is in clear disrepair and the need to replace the facility is obvious and work towards replacement should begin now,” said Senator Cowles.

The 2017-2019 budget established a Corrections Facilities Planning Committee,

which was charged with developing a comprehensive report concerning correctional facilities in Wisconsin. The final report should be released in the coming weeks.

“The facilities report will show that absent a full replacement, GBCI will not be able to operate in a safe or efficient manner and the recommendation will be to invest in a modern, state of the art prison,” said Rep. Steffen, a member of the committee. “Investing in a new facility is not only the right thing to do for the staff and inmates currently at GBCI, it would allow for significant savings of taxpayer dollars attributed to reduced capital and operational costs.”