

# U.S. Rep. Fitzgerald, Wisconsin Delegation: Send letter to Gov. Evers on reclassifying of nearly 1,000 COVID-19 deaths

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**WASHINGTON, DC** – Today, Congressman Scott Fitzgerald (WI-05), alongside Congressmen Glenn Grothman (WI-06), Mike Gallagher (WI-08), Bryan Steil (WI-01), and Tom Tiffany (WI-07) sent a [letter](#) to Governor Tony Evers expressing their concern about Wisconsin's data shortfalls in reporting long-term care COVID-19 deaths. In the letter, the Members request information on questions that remain unanswered surrounding the dire situation in Wisconsin's long-term care facilities.

On March 18, 2021, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [reported](#) that for months the Evers Administration underreported that of the people who died from COVID-19, 26-30% were long-term care residents. Over the last two weeks, this rate has significantly jumped to 45% revealing the extent of the crisis among Wisconsin's most vulnerable population.

*"The recent reports uncovering extensive data shortfalls by the Evers Administration in classifying long-term care COVID-19 deaths are troubling. Our senior population has been among the most vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic, and families depend on State leaders to effectively target and distribute state and federal resources to those who need it most," **said Congressman Fitzgerald.** "The Evers Administration's failure to accurately classify these deaths may have impeded the State's ability to target medical resources toward long-term care facilities and better inform Wisconsin's vaccination program, possibly costing lives. The Evers Administration must answer for these shortfalls and provide more transparency."*

*“Most states have been able to update their COVID-19 statistics in real-time, so it is worrying that Gov. Evers has had to reclassify over 1,000 deaths a year into the pandemic,” **said Rep. Grothman.** “If we would have known that nearly half of Wisconsin’s COVID-19 deaths have happened in long-term care facilities, resources could have been allocated differently to help citizens who are most vulnerable to the virus. Policymakers rely on accurate statistics when addressing the pandemic, so Gov. Evers owes transparency to Wisconsinites before he allocates further state and federal resources.”*

*“Reports that the state of Wisconsin undercounted deaths in long-term care facilities are deeply concerning,” **said Rep. Gallagher.** “These individuals are some of the most vulnerable to COVID-19, and our ability to protect them relies on accurate data. Governor Evers and his administration need to immediately address how and why this happened.”*

*“While national attention has focused on Governor Cuomo’s failure to protect seniors in New York, deaths in Wisconsin long-term care facilities have been underreported. Seniors, especially those in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, are at high risk, yet the Evers administration has operated under inaccurate and misleading data for months. Health care decisions must be made based on sound science and accurate data. The Evers administration has operated under misleading data throughout the crisis resulting in a lack of attention to the people who need help the most. At the Union Grove Veterans Home, the Evers administration denied federal assistance before the first outbreak occurred. Ignoring a problem, refusing resources, and using misleading and inaccurate data only makes the problem worse. Governor Evers must provide transparency as to who in his administration was responsible for the inaccurate data,” **said Steil.***

*“The new reports of COVID-19 deaths in long-term care facilities marks a major shift in the ongoing conversation surrounding the treatment of our elderly residents throughout this pandemic. We are asking Gov. Evers for answers so that we can work with state health officials to understand the discrepancies in the numbers,” **said Rep. Tiffany.***

Read the full letter [here](#).