

Rep. Schraa: Agreement on new youth corrections facility

Posted on Friday, Feb 25, 2022

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(Madison, WI) Rep. Michael Schraa (R-Oshkosh) is pleased with today's vote to fund the new Juvenile Corrections Facility to replace Lincoln Hills School.

"It has been four long years since Governor Walker worked with us to enact his vision to transform juvenile justice in Wisconsin."

Rep. Schraa served on the 25-member Juvenile Corrections Study Committee to develop recommendations for programming and locations for a maximum security facility for Serious Juvenile Offenders. The committee concluded its work back in 2018.

"There have been many setbacks, beginning with the change of administration. It took some time for them to get up to speed, so I even authored a bill to give the governor 6 months more to comply with the law. That didn't help. The deadline to transfer youth to the new facility was last July. The youth are still in a severely substandard facility, and the staff there are still in grave danger."

The location has been the hardest issue to resolve. Act 185 required the committee to first consider state-owned land, but all of the options were inadequate for the purpose.

"Instead of looking at alternatives, Secretary Carr made the unilateral decision to go with a swampy location in Hortonia without consulting the community and despite its distance from Milwaukee." Several other locations in Milwaukee were proposed, also without community and stakeholder buy-in.

"I applaud Speaker Vos for standing up to Carr, who told me, 'Give me the money and I'll find a location.' That's just not responsible.

“No matter how unreasonable the Evers administration has been, we need to do what’s best for our troubled youth. In an eleventh-hour agreement, the Speaker, former Lieutenant Governor, among others, decided to entrust the Building Commission with the final approval of the location in order to pass this bill before the end of the session.”