

Rep. Callahan: Works to save Pine Crest Nursing Home

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[Madison, WI] – State Representative Calvin Callahan (R-Tomahawk) submitted two budget motions to the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) this morning to assist nursing homes with funding challenges they are facing in the 35th Assembly District and across the state. The first motion asks the committee to use \$16.5 million for one-time grants to county-owned nursing homes that had experienced a decrease in supplemental payments last fiscal year. The amount of each facility's grant would be equal to the amount of the decrease it had experienced.

“If you look at the county-owned nursing homes that this has happened to in the past, that have closed up and left their communities – it's a disaster,” stated Rep. Callahan. “Our goal right now is to keep Pine Crest here for the community, the good paying jobs it provides for folks, and the high-quality care it provides its residents and the local Merrill community. I've talked with many folks in the area about the situation, and I'm doing everything possible at the state level to fix it.”

The second budget motion will provide a longer-term funding solution, not just for county-owned nursing homes, but for all nursing homes in Wisconsin. It asks the JFC to approve the creation of a flat payment standard for nursing home support services at the median facility cost plus 25%, a cost of \$73.2 million annually. These include services such as housekeeping, dietary services, facility maintenance, transportation, and utilities. This is a motion that Gov. Evers had originally included in his budget proposal.

“Care for the elderly should not be a Republican or Democrat issue,” continued Rep. Callahan. “In Wisconsin, our aging population is rapidly increasing and we need to ensure we have the facilities to adequately care for that population. With today's inflation and increased regulation hurting many industries, nursing homes are no

exception. This would help them conduct their day-to-day operations while continuing to provide high-quality care for their residents. I hope to see the JFC approve both motions later this week.”

The JFC is scheduled to deliberate items related to the Department of Health Services during an Executive Session on Thursday at 1pm.