

Sen. Feyen: GOP radio address: Investing in safety at our correctional institutions

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Hello, this is State Senator Dan Feyen, representing Wisconsin's 18th Senate District.

For the past several months, the legislature has been hard at work crafting the biennial budget to fund our state for the next two years. Several weeks ago the Legislative Joint Committee on Finance finished building the budget and last week, both houses of the legislature voted to send it to the Governor.

One of the final actions the committee took was making a major investment in one of our state's most precious resources - our state workforce. Over the past few years I have heard continued concerns on safety from many correctional officers due to high vacancy rates. I've also seen these concerns myself in numerous visits to many correctional institutions in my district. That's why I'm particularly excited that we were able to deliver inflationary pay raises to security personnel at the Department of Corrections.

The legislature is making a monumental \$344 million investment to adequately compensate our state's correctional officers. The starting wage for security personnel will increase to \$33/hour, with adjustments for current staff. The add-ons for both understaffed facilities and maximum security institutions will continue, along with a newly created add-on for medium security institutions.

The men and women who serve our state as correctional officers have an incredibly challenging job. The investment in these pay increases will not only help the Department of Corrections with employee attraction and retention, but it will help

ensure their safety – and the continued safety of our communities around the state.