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For Immediate Release
May 2, 2019

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Rep. Schraa Responds to DOC Pay Raises

(Madison, WI) Representative Michael Schraa (R-Oshkosh) was notified late yesterday that the Wisconsin Department of Corrections announced a temporary \$5 add-on being offered to guards in only six maximum security prisons. As GOP Chair of the Assembly Corrections Committee, he is calling out the administration for its haphazard plan that ignores the larger problem while pitting institutions against each other.

"Understandably, guards at other prisons are furious that they were not included. Corrections officers have been contacting me through the night and from early this morning," said Rep. Schraa, chair of the Assembly Corrections Committee. "I've been transparent with Secretary Carr about my ideas for addressing the staffing shortages at DOC, but I was as surprised as anyone with this development."

"Guards absolutely need adequate compensation for their dangerous work and to recruit and retain coworkers. I've been trying to find funding in the budget to do just that. DOC is able to spend an extra \$5 per hour for a portion of the guards, but the rest of the correctional officers cannot be ignored."

DOC is directing the funding to prisons with the worst staffing shortages. Governor Evers has proposed raising the starting wage to \$18.00, while Representative Schraa has been championing a raise to \$19, with proportionate raises for current staff.

This action is well-intentioned, but perhaps not thoroughly vetted. Schraa expects that his budget motions will be considered by the Joint Finance Committee in the next few weeks. Representative Schraa assures his constituents and correctional officers throughout the state that he is diligently working for a comprehensive, sustainable solution.

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