



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

May 10, 2022

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor
115 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707-7863
VIA EMAIL – eversinfo@wisconsin.gov

Dear Governor Evers,

It has come to our attention that you have rescinded the Wisconsin National Guard (WNG) mission assisting with staffing the Veterans Homes at Union Grove, and Wednesday of this week will be their final day at the facility. Despite the looming withdrawal of the WNG, we have seen no plan put in place to deal with the gap in critical services their departure will create. The WNG has been providing necessary assistance to our veterans and the staff at the Veterans Home at Union Grove during this time of need. We are proud of the great work they have done and thank them for performing this invaluable and often-thankless job.

Even with the assistance of the WNG, the staffing shortages at the Veterans Home have not gone away. We have consistently heard from both veterans and their family members of the persistent and chronic staffing issues at the home. With the imminent departure of the WNG and on behalf of the many veterans who rely on this critical care, we call on you to provide a plan to keep the staffing shortage alleviated at the Veterans Home at Union Grove. If you have no transition plan in place, we expect that you will rescind your planned withdrawal of the WNG from the home and find it unacceptable to do otherwise.

We know that staffing the home with WNG members is not a permanent solution and understand that nearly every sector of the economy is currently experiencing severe staffing shortages. However, we also know the staffing issue at the Veterans Home has existed long before the pandemic and we have seen no significant progress in dealing with this problem.

We were pleased to see the WNG called to assist the Veterans Home at Union Grove as a necessary stopgap to ensure our veterans received needed support and to temporarily assist in alleviating some of the staffing issues at the home. However, you have had more than enough time to prepare for their departure and pulling them out now without a backup plan is dangerously short-sighted and will have potentially dire consequences for the members living there and those that staff them.

This facility delivers vital care to our nation's heroes, and making sure they receive the high-quality care they have earned is of the upmost importance. During these difficult times, we cannot let our veterans fall through the cracks and this begins with ensuring there is the necessary staff to provide proper care at our state's veterans homes.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Van Wanggaard
State Senator
21st District

Robin J. Vos
State Representative
63rd District

cc: Secretary Mary Kolar, Department of Veterans Affairs