

Under the Walker Administration there have been severe and systemic problems at the Department of Corrections, and the resignation of Secretary Ed Wall is not enough to solve them. Assembly Democrats officially request Audit of the Department of Corrections.

MADISON – Following the resignation of Corrections Secretary **Ed Wall** last Friday, Assembly Democratic Leader **Pet er Barca** (D-Kenosha) said that the Walker Administration and Republican legislators must also be held accountable for the crisis at the Department of Corrections. Assembly Democrats also officially requested an audit of the Department of Corrections in response to the severe health and safety concerns.



“While a leadership change is warranted, the Walker Administration and Republican legislators must also be held accountable for the crisis at the Department of Corrections,” **Rep. Barca said** . “Under Gov. Walker and Republicans, our correctional institutions have become dangerously mismanaged and a toxic environment for staff and inmates."

The Walker Administration and Republican lawmakers have known for years that there were significant problems at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake and yet took no action. Wisconsin deserves accountability not only at the Department of Corrections but also throughout the Walker Administration and from Republicans in power to ensure that all our correctional facilities are the safest possible for workers, inmates and the citizens of Wisconsin.

In response to the ongoing issues at the state’s correctional system, members of the Assembly Democratic caucus also formally requested the Joint Committee on Audit to audit the Department of Corrections. A copy of their letter is available here .

There have been severe and systemic problems at the Department of Corrections (DOC) including understaffing, workplace safety, ballooning overtime costs, and low morale among the DOC workforce. Media investigations have revealed that the Walker Administration and Republican lawmakers have long known about problems at institutions including the juvenile facilities, yet took no meaningful action to address them.

We must continue to call for meaningful action to address the serious issues at the DOC. Assembly Democrats on the Corrections committee recently called for public hearings in response to the serious issues at the state's juvenile facilities. Reps. **Mandela Barnes** (D-Milwaukee) and **Evan Goyke** (D-Milwaukee), the Assembly's ranking Democratic members on the Corrections and Criminal Justice and Public Safety committees respectively, in December visited Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake after media investigations detailed mismanagement at those institutions.

Democrats have also put forward meaningful solutions to address the toxic environment and lack of accountability at the Department of Corrections. Last month, Sen. **Jon Erpenbach** (D-Middleton), Rep. **Dave Considine** (D-Baraboo) and other Democratic lawmakers introduced a series of reforms that would improve staffing issues and safety at the state's correctional facilities.