http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/boy-in-doc-s5.jpg 

Three months pass after DOJ and FBI raid troubled facility, serious security deficiencies, under staffing issues and child safety concerns continue despite public calls for action.

MADISON - Nearly three months after law enforcement officials raided the Lincoln Hills juvenile corrections facility, Legislative Republicans have yet to take any steps to address the facility's serious security deficiencies, understaffing issues and child safety concerns. The inexplicable delays have intensified public calls for legislative action.



"The lack of legislative action to correct serious and well-documented cases of child abuse at Lincoln Hills is alarming," said Senate Democratic leader **Jennifer Shilling** (D-La Crosse). "Rather than addressing these issues, there appears to be a coordinated effort among legislative Republicans to cover-up Gov. Walker's mishandling of this appalling situation. Parents, families and community members deserve answers."

While the FBI has taken over the criminal investigation at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake, top legislative leaders have refused to address the chronic understaffing and safety concerns at state correction facilities. Observers and public safety advocates have questioned why immediate steps have not been taken to increase staffing levels, restore workplace safety protections and investigate the withholding of public documents by administration officials.

"I don't know what else Republicans could be trying to hide that would justify their continued inaction," added Shilling. "Regardless of the ongoing criminal investigation, the state has a constitutional obligation to address safety issues and protect against cruel and unusual treatment. It is time for Republican legislative leaders to stop covering for Gov. Walker and immediately exercise their oversight authority, address security concerns and improve child safety protections."

Despite warning signs dating back to 2012, local officials continue to describe the treatment of boys and girls at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake as “inhumane.” In addition to calling for public hearings, Democrats have introduced a series of correction reform bills that remain stalled in legislative committees. The bills would increase staffing, improve worker training and limit forced-overtime policies.

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Legislative staffer Tony Palese contributed.