

Veteran's Nursing Homes Should Not Be Shortchanged

Written by State Senate Democrats

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No veteran should feel under-served at King or anywhere else in Wisconsin. We need to be concerned about the banking and raiding of surplus nursing home funds during the budget debate.

MADISON - Senator **Jon Erpenbach** says it is alarming to read how the Republican policies that have allowed, even encouraged, the building of surplus funds at the King Veterans Home near Waupaca have affected resident care. But, he goes on to say Democrats have been raising alarms.



“Senate Democrats have been concerned about the banking and raiding of surplus nursing home funds and moved to require Legislative approval of those transfers during the 2015-2017 budget debate. We also moved for a GPR allocation to the Veterans Fund rather than raiding the nursing home surplus that should be used first for resident care. DVA has moved \$12 million just this summer and has said they plan to move another \$18.6 million in the next two years,” said Erpenbach. “At the same time Senator Lassa has been leading our caucus, asking for an audit of the King facility in October of 2015 because of concerns brought to her office.”

In March of 2015 Joint Committee on Finance Democrats wrote Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Scocos concerned for the long term stability of the Veterans Fund and specifically addressed excess funds from nursing homes, “These revenues are derived from an exemption from the Nursing Home Bed tax, the Federal “per diem” paid to facilities that care for Veterans, the higher “state rate” for reimbursement for Medicaid and private pay from Veterans and their families. If your department is taking all of this money from patient care funds is our patient care truly meeting the needs of the veterans we serve?”

“No veteran should feel underserved at King or anywhere else in Wisconsin. To read that facilities could be suffering, food quality has declined and that residents are not having the same opportunities they used to is alarming and should prompt a Legislative Audit in the least. I

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hope that Republicans finally see that Legislative oversight is needed. From here, it looks like decisions have been made to cut costs that are sacrificing resident care and comfort, perhaps just to bank money for other uses," said Erpenbach.