

Legislators Introduce Juvenile Corrections Bill

Written by Wisconsin Senate, Zachary Benson
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Bill to address the serious allegations of abuse and mistreatment in Wisconsin's juvenile corrections system, including the Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake facilities.

MADISON – Senator Lena Taylor (D - Milwaukee) and a group of bipartisan legislators introduced a comprehensive bill on Tuesday to address the serious allegations of abuse and mistreatment in Wisconsin's juvenile corrections system. The crises were exacerbated by a failure to implement best practices, resulting in an unsafe environment for juveniles and staff at Wisconsin's Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake juvenile facilities.



"I am glad that what I have repeatedly said and advocated for in past years regarding juvenile corrections is finally getting traction from my colleagues," said Senator **Lena Taylor**. "However, it is a shame that our kids and corrections staff had to wait for an election year to see the Governor and his fellow Republicans meaningfully acknowledge their safety concerns."

Since April 2016, Senator Taylor has twice called for Governor Walker to hold a special session to address Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake Schools. The Governor rejected both calls. In July 2017, Senator Taylor circulated a juvenile justice bill of rights package which included a juvenile solitary confinement ban, transfer of juvenile corrections to the Department of Children and Families, authority for Milwaukee County to have a juvenile hybrid facility, and requirements for medically-trained staff to distribute medication.

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The proposals have not been heard by a legislative committee since they were first introduced in August 2017. The bill unveiled Tuesday will incorporate many of the measures initially proposed by Senator Taylor.

"Our kids and staff have waited for relief for years, and they cannot afford to wait any longer" Taylor concluded.