



John Nygren

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 89TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Republicans Vote to Expand Mental Health Access

Madison--State Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette), Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Finance released the following statement after Republicans in the State Assembly attempted a veto override on three important mental health items that were included WISCONSIN Budget:

“Republicans have heard overwhelmingly about the need to invest resources in mental health services for vulnerable populations. Responding to this, Republicans passed a budget that invested \$70 million in mental health services for rural areas of the state and vulnerable populations. It is unfortunate that Governor Tony Evers did not place the same priority on funding mental health services as Republicans did.”

“By voting against the override of these three vetoes, Democrats in the Assembly, for the second time this year, voted against providing increased resources for mental health services.”

The three attempted veto overrides pertained to the following items:

Northern Wisconsin Regional Crisis Center

- The only state mental health facilities are Mendota (Madison) and Winnebago (Oshkosh). Northwestern Wisconsin has no facility locally to which to transport patients.
- The new center would have expanded mental health crisis services to northwestern Wisconsin.
- The goal of the provision was to serve individuals closer to their home in Northwest Wisconsin instead of transporting them across the state.

Physician and Behavioral Health Funding

- Republicans acknowledged the fact that Wisconsin is facing a shortage of behavioral health providers by providing \$10 million to increase reimbursement rates for mental health providers.

Qualified Treatment Training (QTT) Grants

- Currently, nearly 50 of Wisconsin’s 72 counties are designated as having a significant shortage of adult and pediatric mental health providers.
- In 2017, only 52% of the children ages 3-17 with a mental or behavioral health condition received treatment in Wisconsin.
- The QTT grants included in the WISCONSIN Budget would have allowed hospitals, health centers and health care systems to expand the number of clinical social workers, professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and psychologists to help meet this growing need.