



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Rep. Goyke and Sen. Taylor Introduce Bi-Partisan Wisconsin Corrections Reform & Reinvestment Initiative

*Legislation brings reform to State corrections system, while providing taxpayer savings
and preserving public safety*

MADISON – Today Representative Evan Goyke (D-Milwaukee) and Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) introduced bi-partisan legislation to bring needed reforms to Wisconsin’s adult corrections system, including solutions to address non-criminal revocations, Wisconsin’s earned release system, and changes to community supervision.

Criminal justice reform has become a national bi-partisan issue with both federal and state-led initiatives in approximately 45 states to address rising prison populations, costs, and to avoid the massive costs of constructing new prison facilities, while also maintaining public safety. Today, Wisconsin faces the reality of a growing prison population and a similar future of needing to build a new prison unless reforms are made. We make the case for reform.

In the 2019-2021 budget, the Legislature approved a 5% increase in the Department of Corrections budget, with an annual budget now above \$1.3 Billion. Included in the budget was an estimate that the prison population will grow roughly 600 additional inmates by 2021, to over 24,300 inmates, an all-time high in Wisconsin.

“This bi-partisan package of bills to reform our justice system is built from the experiences of other states to safely reduce the prison population and reinvest the savings to reduce crime,” stated Rep. Goyke.

“Each bill follows the same framework: Reform-Report-Reinvest - Safely reduce the prison population, increase reporting and data collection, and reinvest the savings into proven recidivism reducing programming.”

“As I said when the bills were circulated - Building a new prison may cost more than \$300 million with an ongoing annual cost of anywhere from \$20 million to \$40 million depending on the capacity and level of security,” commented Sen. Taylor.

“There is a looming crisis in corrections. Conservative, liberal, and states with divided government across the nation have introduced similar proposals to address the challenges in their respective states. I am glad the majority party has joined Rep. Goyke and I in this effort.”

This legislation will soon be referred to committee.

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