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NEWS RELEASE:  
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## JFC Rejects Locating a Youth Prison in Hortonia

MADISON— On March 12, 2019, the Governor announced that one of two new Type 1 Juvenile Correctional Facility locations would be in the Town of Hortonia in Outagamie County on state owned property.

Today, exactly eleven months later, the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) voted to reject Governor Tony Evers' proposed Type 1 Facility location in Hortonia. Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay), who represents Hortonia, released the following statement reacting to the rejection of this site:

*“From the day that Governor Evers and his Department of Corrections abruptly announced that Hortonia will house a Type 1 Serious Juvenile Offender Facility without the prior notification or acknowledgement of local citizens or elected officials, I have tirelessly advocated as a conduit for the constituents in my district to ensure their opposition to this location was heard. I shared the concerns of these residents with members of the Joint Finance Committee, and I applaud them for listening and choosing to vote to reject this site. In doing so, JFC members stood with the over 700 citizens of Hortonia, Hortonville, and surrounding area who signed a petition in opposition to the construction of the youth prison.*”

Since the site was announced, Senator Cowles provided amendment language for 2019 Assembly Bill 188, which was adopted and signed into law, to ensure proper local input by requiring approval by the local government for significant changes to the juvenile correctional facility and by providing extended timelines for Department of Corrections (DOC) notices of local hearings prior to the construction of these facilities. Furthermore, along with other area legislators, Senator Cowles sent a letter to the JFC Co-Chairs to delay their vote until DOC improved communication with the Town of Hortonia and worked to gain support for the facility. This was ultimately not achieved. Finally, Senator Cowles also submitted comments on DOC's draft Environmental Assessment for this proposed site identifying significant concerns regarding consistent flooding, wetland mitigation needs, and ecological and wildlife concerns.

*“I can't think of a worse spot to put this facility from several standpoints. Anyone who's driven down Highway 15 in spring would have witnessed the severity of the flooding on the Wolf River. DOC proposed that this facility should be built right in the floodplain. Additionally, with several endangered or threatened species nearby, wetland concerns, and the unstable foundation for building, this placement was not thought through. To disregard these concerns atop the significant lack of communication with the Town of Hortonia and repeated threats to annex this location by a nearby city, it comes as no surprise that JFC took the correct action to reject this location”.*

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