



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grothman on the Safe Reopening of Hospitals

(Washington, D.C.) – Today, Congressman Glenn Grothman (R-Glenbeulah) announced that he encourages the safe reopening of Wisconsin hospitals and medical facilities to elective surgeries and other non-essential procedures.

During the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak, government officials released projections on the number of patients and hospitalizations areas in the country could expect to see. This drew the attention of the hospital community, who adhered to this guidance and proceeded to cancel elective surgeries and non-essential procedures in order to accommodate the high number of expected patients.

It has now become apparent that, to this point, Wisconsin has fallen far short of these projections. The Wisconsin Hospital Association is reporting that three weeks ago, Wisconsin reached a high-water mark of 446 patients in hospitals being treated for COVID-19. Today, they report 359 patients. Even at the peak, there were on average less than four patients per hospital. The lower-than-expected number of patients means that many of the hospital beds across the state are empty. The bureaucrats in Washington and Madison should be encouraging health care providers to resume services for non-COVID-19 related patients.

*“Wisconsinites have done an outstanding job slowing the spread of the virus and, as it stands today, many hospitals have enough room to treat additional non-COVID-19 patients,” said **Grothman**. “As we know, procedures that are referred to as elective or non-essential are not always optional to many of these patients and their families. Because of the expected deluge projected by officials in Washington and Madison, hospitals have been delaying mammograms, stents, valve repairs, cancer screenings, biopsies, mastectomies, seizure monitoring and MRIs.*

What do we tell the woman who finds out she has breast cancer in November when she wasn't able to get a mammogram in April in an empty hospital?

I speak to many medical professionals, as well as potential patients, within the Sixth District who have had procedures put on hold. It is particularly frustrating because, to them, it seems obvious that the high levels of COVID-19 patients that people were anticipating for Wisconsin did not appear and many hospitals currently have the bandwidth to accommodate them.

While the major concern here is patients going without medical care, hospital workers are currently being furloughed at alarming rates and added to the country's mounting unemployment line.

I realize that social distancing is one reason the hospitals are empty and am grateful that Wisconsinites have united to slow the spread of the virus. There are, of course, areas of the country that have been more affected by COVID-19 and their facilities will require more time to fight the virus before resuming regular operations. I believe we should continue to remain vigilant. If Wisconsin sees an uptick in cases in a specific area, we can revisit the idea of postponing additional elective surgeries and non-essential procedures at that time. But right now, it's time to get America's sidelined health professionals back to work doing what they do best – saving lives.”

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U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman is serving his third term representing Wisconsin's 6th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives.



Link to the release: <https://grothman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=1550>