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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATE OF WISCONSIN

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Secretary Jon Litscher
Department of Corrections
3099 E. Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53704

Dear Secretary Litscher,

Thank you for your willingness to serve, yet again, as the leader of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Under your direction, the Department has put in place multiple reforms to Copper Lake and Lincoln Hills Schools (CLS/LHS), including increasing physical and mental health staffing and provision of care, improving training and compensation for youth counselors, requiring the use of body cameras to document youth counselor interactions with offenders, and revising procedures to ensure transparency and accountability.

As you know, our 2017-19 Biennial Budget builds on these reforms, making significant investments in staff at CLS/LHS. An additional 8.25 FTE youth counselor positions in each year of the biennium will improve staff ratios at LHS. The Budget also adds 9 full-time medical positions to ensure medication administration is done by professional medical staff and 3.25 FTE positions for the provision and enhancement of mental health services at CLS. In addition, the State Building Commission approved investments of more than \$2.5 million for infrastructure and security needs.

In July, operational changes were imposed by the courts at CLS/LHS. Since these changes, there have been numerous examples of juvenile misconduct and assaults on staff.

As you are aware, juveniles at CLS/LHS are guilty of the most serious offenses in our criminal justice system. Juveniles who are convicted as adults are housed at CLS/LHS and have committed crimes such as first-degree intentional homicide, first-degree reckless homicide, first-degree reckless injury, second-degree sexual assault, battery, battery to an unborn child, robbery, and possession of a dangerous weapon. Moreover, violent individuals in these institutions have become emboldened following repeated media reports and court-ordered operational changes.

Last week, you provided me with an update of the situation at CLS/LHS, including an update on attacks on staff. Clearly, the men and women who staff these facilities have challenging jobs, and we value their hard work and dedication. To support and further the reforms at CLS/LHS you have implemented, I am requesting that you appoint an interim superintendent of CLS/LHS while the Department completes the recruitment of a new permanent superintendent. I am requesting you select a person, with input from the administrators of the Division of Juvenile Corrections, who has an outstanding set of administrative skills gained by working in the

Department. This person selected will work on-site, ensuring the court-imposed changes are met while protecting the safety of staff and juveniles.

We cannot allow individuals convicted of battery, armed robbery, and even murder to feel empowered to attack staff and each other in these institutions. No matter the challenges, we must provide the men and women working in CLS/LHS with the tools they need to maintain order in the facilities and protect themselves and to protect the offenders held at these institutions.

Sincerely,



Scott Walker
Governor

