



# *Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors*

*Supervisor John Weishan, Jr., District 16*

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**MENTAL HEALTH BILL DOES NOTHING FOR PATIENTS**  
**Where Are the Changes to the System that Make Improvements for Patients**  
**And How Does It Improve Accountability for the Patients?**

A bill recently introduced in the Wisconsin State Legislature seems to be more about politics than working to improve the system of mental health, Supervisor John Weishan said today. The proposal removes oversight from an elected body to an unelected board, while maintaining the status quo on several years of failed day-to-day management of the system, he said.

“How are patients going to be better served by the same failed administrations and less oversight by a new authority that only meets four times a year?” Supervisor Weishan said.

Weishan said the County Board has added additional dollars, above the County Executive’s Recommended Budget, into the system for new programs. In addition, he said, in the 2013 budget, funding was added to identify community capacity to prepare for and ensure safe community placement for individuals and residents.

“While everyone believes we need to continue to move toward reform, I ask the question: What does this proposal do for mental health patients in Milwaukee County?” Weishan said. “Where are the changes in the administration for improved operation? Is the focus on and improved patient care or safety?”

Just recently it was discovered that a safety report was hidden from the public by the administration and improvements under the administration’s authority were not addressed. It appears under this new proposal, while the “new” administrator does report to the new authority, does not make it clear whether or not the day-to-day management of the administrator still resides with the county executive.

“It should be of concern by those who are looking for reform that the day-to-day management and supervision of this system will not be changing,” Weishan said. “This will be a political appointment, with the same boss.

“This current County Board passed additional dollars for mental services and asked that we have safe and available capacity in community settings for our residents before moving them. I do not see anywhere in this proposal a requirement that safe community capacity be available before closing the facility to those in need.

“The safety of our neighborhoods, along with patient safety, cannot be overlooked for short-term political gain.”

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