



# *Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors*

*Supervisor John F. Weishan, Jr., District 16*

For Immediate Release September 17, 2014  
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**SUPERVISOR JOHN WEISHAN, JR. WARNS AGAINST DECREASING INPATIENT BEDS  
AT MENTAL HEALTH COMPLEX**

**Cites Report Saying There is a Continued Need for Inpatient Beds at Behavioral Health Division**

Citing a report issued on Tuesday, Milwaukee County Supervisor John F. Weishan, Jr. today warned that the County should not decrease the number of inpatient beds at the Behavioral Health Division, saying that moving acute psychiatric patients to a community-based model could harm patients while possibly creating hazardous conditions in local communities.

Weishan, referring to a joint report of the Public Policy Forum and the Human Services Research Institute, said that BHD's current capacity must remain stable in order to house acute, or severely mentally ill, patients. He added that recent reforms to the County's mental health system, including stripping the County Board of authority over BHD and creating a new mental health board, did nothing to address the County's need for the housing of severely mentally ill patients.

"The joint report warns about inadequate housing for acute, or severely mentally ill, patients," Weishan said. "There will always be a need for such housing, and we cannot rely on private hospitals to provide that housing. The alternative suggested has been community-based treatment. So what do we do with those acute patients who simply cannot live in the community without 24-hour supervision and care?"

"Does this mean we will be placing those acute patients in neighborhoods where they cannot care for themselves and then become a threat to themselves or the people in those neighborhoods? What exactly is the plan for housing acute patients? I urge BHD to come up with a plan to take care of those with acute needs without throwing them out of BHD housing and into the community."

Weishan said he was also concerned about what BHD will do with those patients with long-term needs.

"The sad fact is that the County cannot get out of the business of caring for the acutely mentally ill," Weishan said. "Many of them are poor and without insurance. Whether these patients need short-term or long-term care, the County needs to be able to help them. Private hospitals cannot do it alone, and the community cannot always support their needs."

"I urge the new mental health board to do everything in its power to maintain beds for those in need of mental health support."

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