

Durbin's statement on Rauners comments at Illinois Veteran's Home Quincy

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today released the following statement after Governor Bruce Rauner concluded his stay at the Illinois Veterans' Home (IVH) Quincy and the Illinois General Assembly held a joint legislative hearing to examine the ongoing legionellosis outbreaks at IVH Quincy and the State's response.



“While IVH Quincy is owned, operated, and managed by the State of Illinois, I’ve supported IVH Quincy through my role in the federal government and will continue to do so. Last week when I met with the Governor at IVH Quincy, I reminded him of VA reimbursement in the past and renewed my commitment to help in the future.

“I’ve been engaged at the federal level since the first Legionnaires’ outbreak in 2015 to prevent and mitigate such outbreaks in the future. As I mentioned in my conversation with the Governor last week, VA reimburses the State for two-thirds of what they spend on Quincy, including spending on renovation and construction, such as the \$6.4 million investment in the water treatment facility made in 2016. I will continue to advocate for IVH Quincy and push for federal funding on their behalf, even if the Governor and his Administration choose to ignore my letters and requests for timely and accurate information,” said Durbin.

Last week, Durbin [visited](#) IVH Quincy to meet with leadership and tour the facility. He called for improved transparency from Governor Rauner and his Administration in disclosing all new cases of Legionnaires’ disease and has urged the state to comply with all recommendations from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent future outbreaks.

Durbin continued, “Today, the Governor stated that his goal is ‘zero instances of *Legionella* infection’. That should have been the goal from the start. I hope that his Administration will quickly – finally – create and enact a targeted, specific, strategic plan to see this goal through to fruition.

“I am pleased that the Illinois General Assembly yesterday agreed that we can no longer wait for yet another outbreak, for yet another resident to die, before making good on our promise to our veterans. They, their loved ones, and the excellent staff at IVH Quincy all deserve much more than what they have been given for the past three years.”

Since the first Legionnaires’ disease outbreak in 2015, Durbin has been in contact with state and federal agencies to make certain that IVH Quincy is taking the proper steps to provide a high quality of care to our veterans and their families, and to prevent any future outbreaks. Durbin has called for a review of the state’s response and has worked to ensure that the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Illinois Department of Public Health continue to receive federal assistance from the CDC and VA. A number of questions remain about the State’s timeline in responding to the annual outbreaks, including whether State officials appropriately notified IVH Quincy family, staff, and the public about the epidemic, and whether they immediately requested federal assistance that was made available to them.

At the request of Senators Durbin and Duckworth in early December, the U.S. Government Accountability Office is conducting a review of Department of Veterans' Affairs oversight of nursing home care across the country, including state veterans' homes such as Quincy.