



WISCONSIN STATE SENATE
DALE W. SCHULTZ

July 30, 2007

Representative Mike Huebsch
Speaker of the State Assembly
State Capitol, Rm. 211 West
Madison, WI 53707

Senator Judy Robson
Senate Majority Leader
State Capitol, Rm. 211 South
Madison, WI 53707

Representative Kitty Rhodes
Joint Committee on Finance, Co-Chair
State Capitol, Rm. 309 East
Madison, WI 53707

Senator Russ Decker
Joint Committee on Finance, Co-Chair
State Capitol, Rm. 122 South
Madison, WI 53707

Representative Jeff Fitzgerald
Assembly Majority Leader
State Capitol, Rm. 214 West
Madison, WI 53707

Senator Robert Jauch
Joint Committee on Finance, Co-Chair
State Capitol, Rm. 118 South
Madison, WI 53707

Representative Jim Kreuser
Assembly Minority Leader
State Capitol, Rm. 201 West
Madison, WI 53707

Senator Scott Fitzgerald
Senate Minority Leader
State Capitol, Rm. 202 South
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Conference Committee Members,

I appreciate the difficult work you have before you in reconciling differences between two very different budget proposals. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on an aspect of this budget that is important to Southwest Wisconsin.

First, I agree with the sentiment expressed by some committee members that taxpayers are best served by a budget process that 1.) establishes the level of spending taxpayers can afford, and 2.) prioritizes how that money is spent. This is how families manage their finances and state government should be no different.

I am writing to ensure that as you begin to prioritize, you consider the effect of your work on a major economic force and employer in my district – the University of Wisconsin - Platteville.

UW-Platteville is entering the third year of its Tri-State Initiative. The initiative is aimed at addressing Wisconsin's need for technically skilled graduates and filling our state's projected shortfall in engineering, science and technology by attracting students to Wisconsin from neighboring states. It is expected that UWP's enrollment will increase by 2000 students in the next 10 years. But with growth comes challenges that underscore the importance of state resources.

As you deliberate, I urge you to work toward a bipartisan compromise that provides fair compensation for UWP's faculty and staff. This will help UWP retain and attract qualified

faculty and staff in a competitive marketplace. Employees who are valued produce results in the form of successful graduates.

Secondly, UW-Platteville's success is also predicated on creating the classroom, laboratory, and faculty office spaces needed to accommodate a growing student body. The modest state supported building improvements they seek now and in future bienniums are imperative to their mission of expanding the pool of technically skilled workers in our economy. UWP has worked hard to minimize the impact of these projects on taxpayers by aggressively seeking gift money and utilizing program revenue generated by the Tri-State Initiative. Decisions made now will impact the future. Please consider this as you work through recommendations on the UW-System building program.

Third, UWP's substantial growth demands resources to cover operating expenses. Serving more students has increased the costs associated with utilities, campus services, and programming that are deserving of state support.

UW-Platteville holds great promise for the economy of Southwest Wisconsin and our state as a whole. As they do their part in preparing the workers that make our economy strong, I ask that in this difficult budget we do our part to support them. If you have questions of me I would be happy to speak to you at any time.

With kindest regards,

Dale Schultz
Senate District 17