



**Office of the President**

1720 Van Hise Hall  
1220 Linden Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1559  
(608) 262-2321  
(608) 262-3985 Fax

email: [kreilly@uwsa.edu](mailto:kreilly@uwsa.edu)  
website: <http://www.uwsa.edu>

TO: Members of the Veterans Affairs Committee

FROM: Kevin P. Reilly

RE: AB 317 and AB 318

DATE: May 16, 2005

The UW System is concerned about the lack of funding provisions in the two bills you will take up on Tuesday, May 17: AB 317 and AB 318.

AB 317 exempts certain dependents from tuition and fees to attend a University of Wisconsin institution. AB 318 reduces by 50% the tuition and fees required for a veteran to attend a University of Wisconsin institution.

It has been a long standing tradition of American society that all citizens should bear the financial obligation of veterans' benefits because all citizens gain by their sacrifice.

AB 317 and AB 318 expand benefits but do not pay for them. Without an appropriation, the costs for these well-deserved benefits would be shifted to current students and their families instead of all Wisconsin residents who wish to support these benefits. Alternatively, it would result in a reduction in services and support for veterans and non-veterans students alike.

The DVA has noted that AB 317 represents a substantial change in eligibility for the dependents of veterans and will lead to a dramatic cost increase due to the anticipated demand for this benefit. The bill should include a GPR appropriation to the UW System to offset up to \$5.4 million in lost tuition revenue for AB 317 and up to \$7.6 million for AB 318.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has the advantage of experience with past participation rate of veterans that the UW System may not have. DVA is more familiar with other benefits veterans may choose to use instead of this new benefit which could reduce the need for GPR substantially.

Please consider an amendment which would appropriate at least the DVA estimates and allow the UW system to request a restoration of any additional lost tuition at a 13.10 hearing of the Joint Finance Committee. Thank you for your consideration.