



July 25, 2007

Representative Michael Huebsch  
Wisconsin State Assembly  
211 West, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Huebsch:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has a vital mission: Build a stronger economy for Wisconsin, enhance the ability of our farmers and industry workers to compete in the global marketplace, improve citizens' quality of life, and provide an affordable, quality education.

However, the state Assembly's proposed 2007-09 budget will force a retreat from that mission, leaving Wisconsinites holding a bag of lost opportunities. Our mission will be jeopardized if this proposal—or anything close to it—is adopted.

You can't continue to siphon off large chunks of what makes an institution excellent and expect it to stay excellent. Our citizens need to understand now what these cuts will mean for their future.

Students are being hit hard by the Assembly-proposed cuts in financial aid, but the effects of the budget go beyond financial aid—and could directly affect the value students and their parents receive for their tuition and tax money.

The Assembly budget deals a blow to our operating budget. It does not provide the money needed to continue operating UW-Madison at current levels.

The \$45.6 million Assembly cut to UW-Madison's operating budget would only provide enough money to run the university through part of each academic year. Turning out the lights and sending everyone home is not an option. Students, families, farmers, businesses and taxpayers rely on our work.

The costs aren't for frills or new programs—these expenses simply meet our costs of continuing to operate.

Office of the Chancellor

Bascom Hall University of Wisconsin-Madison 500 Lincoln Drive Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1380

Representative Michael Huebsch

July 25, 2007

Page 2

These funds ensure that the campus can meet its basic commitments to educate students, pay for utilities, make debt service payments, meet maintenance costs, compensate employees at levels approved by state lawmakers, and carry out other critical responsibilities.

Our state has been challenged by fiscal problems in recent years, and lawmakers have repeatedly asked us to make sacrifices. In the six years leading up to this budget, UW-Madison absorbed more than \$50 million in permanent cuts to its base GPR funding and the loss of 340 positions.

The Assembly wants to extend the last six years of decreasing support, justifying this steady retreat by saying that more money is being allocated than in the last biennium. Here's the problem with that justification: nothing, anywhere, costs the same over time.

Cuts to our operating costs could affect the number of librarians, tutors, advisors, financial aid specialists, police officers, and custodians who provide services that help our students succeed, graduate on time, and stay safe.

These cuts will also make it more difficult to retain key faculty in a fiercely competitive marketplace. Our top faculty will continue to be targeted by other institutions that recognize the value of investing in people. In a short time, we have seen a doubling of the number of faculty receiving outside offers.

Although the Assembly budget contains funding to help keep these faculty members, it was grossly scaled back. And even that relief cannot compensate for Wisconsin's growing reputation as being hostile toward higher education. We can't afford to become a farm team for other universities. But that reputation is growing, as other universities cherry-pick our top researchers and teachers.

In fiscal 2007, faculty helped to bring \$1.028 billion in extramural support for the university, directly helping to sustain research that spurs Wisconsin's economy and helps sustain the university itself. Of the 16,225 FTE employed at the university, state support through GPR and tuition pays for 7,707 positions. The remaining 8,518 are supported by the gifts, grants and other sources of external support generated by the entrepreneurial efforts of faculty and staff and the tradition of excellence they have established here.

As Wisconsin struggles to find ways to increase per-capita income and transform a manufacturing economy into a more forward-looking one, UW-Madison is leading the way—in agriculture, business, science, medicine and technology. But with each new budget, new ways have been found to tie our hands.

We've managed cut after cut, finding creative ways to protect the quality of our instruction, research and outreach. But we've not been completely successful, and the latest proposal is another major threat to our mission.

Representative Michael Huebsch

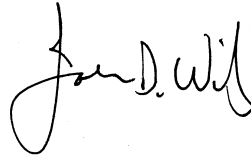
July 25, 2007

Page 3

We can't afford to continue this cycle of cuts and unmet promises of relief in the next budget. That will only lead Wisconsin further down a path of mediocrity and prevent Wisconsin citizens of average means from having access to a world-class university.

We hope budget negotiators consider the long-term effects of gaining short-term budget relief and act to safeguard higher education. Wisconsin citizens expect us to preserve the quality in which they have invested money, hopes and aspirations—for both their children and for Wisconsin's future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Wiley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

John D. Wiley  
Chancellor

cc: Governor Jim Doyle

