



Office of the President

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May 18, 2005

To: Members, Joint Committee on Finance

From: Kevin P. Reilly, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin P. Reilly".

Subject: UW System budget

As you prepare to vote on the University of Wisconsin System's 2005-07 budget, I ask that you give strong consideration to the university's pivotal role in strengthening the Wisconsin economy and securing a viable future for all Wisconsin citizens. My colleagues and I are well aware of the difficult decisions you must make, and the budget challenges you are confronting.

The UW System has stepped up substantially to help close the state's \$3.2 billion deficit – absorbing 23 percent of the spending cuts in the 2002 budget repair bill and 38 percent of the spending cuts in the current biennium while we represent less than 9 percent of the state budget. These dramatic reductions have made it harder for us to maintain quality and access.

We were grateful that the Joint Committee on Finance and the Legislature did not deepen the substantial cuts offered by Governor Doyle to the UW System budget in the current biennium. We ask that you hold the line again on any additional cuts this time.

Since the Governor introduced his budget last February, we have been consistent in stating that there are elements that would benefit us and our students, such as additional financial aid, more faculty in the classroom, and the retention of high demand faculty. But there are also several aspects that are already challenging us, such as having to cut at least 200 jobs and the lack of funding for a competitive pay plan which is seriously affecting our ability to recruit.

We are again asking you to support the modest reinvestment proposed by the Governor, as well as additional support and flexibility that will enable us to fulfill our mission to improve access for Wisconsin students and assure Wisconsin's success with a well-educated workforce and new knowledge to generate new jobs.

Your positive action will keep Wisconsin's economy growing and assure the quality of life for all our citizens. Without your support, we will face great difficulty in maintaining quality, access, affordability and service to the state and local communities.

cc: Regents
Chancellors