



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

October 25, 2017

President Ray Cross
University of Wisconsin System
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706

President Cross:

We are writing to express our deep concern with your proposal to merge UW Colleges with four-year UW institutions. Especially concerning to us is the complete lack of collaboration and deliberation in such a far-reaching proposal.

We recognize Wisconsin's demographic challenges. However, that reality should push us towards efforts to attract and retain young people in Wisconsin. One of the main ways to accomplish that is by promoting a strong UW System through robust state investment, not merging institutions. We are concerned that this merger will not maintain adequate access to higher education and that it could open the door to campus closures in the future.

Many questions remain about this proposal and the process by which it came about. Why did its development not occur through shared governance? Will programs and departments be eliminated? Will staff and faculty be cut? Why has a cost savings analysis not been done yet?

Prior to seeking approval from the Board of Regents in November, we urge you to include stakeholders in any UW restructuring, including chancellors, faculty, staff, students, and community members. They deserve the opportunity to provide input on this proposal. Without sufficient study and the consultation and inclusion of concerns from these stakeholders, we fear this proposal will not succeed. We urge you to slow down this process and form a stakeholder group to examine the issue and propose possible remedies.

Sincerely,

Sen. Jon Erpenbach
27th Senate District

Rep. Chris Taylor
76th Assembly District

Rep. Jimmy Anderson
47th Assembly District

Rep. Terese Berceau
77th Assembly District

Rep. Jill Billings
95th Assembly District

Rep. David Bowen
10th Assembly District

Rep. Jonathan Brostoff
19th Assembly District

Rep. Dave Considine
81st Assembly District

Rep. Gary Hebl
46th Assembly District

Rep. Dianne Hesselbein
79th Assembly District

Rep. Debra Kolste
44th Assembly District

Rep. Nick Milroy
73rd Assembly District

Rep. Sondy Pope
80th Assembly District

Rep. Melissa Sargent
48th Assembly District

Rep. Katrina Shankland
71st Assembly District

Rep. Mark Spreitzer
45th Assembly District

Rep. Lisa Subeck
78th Assembly District

Rep. Don Vruwink
43rd Assembly District

Rep. JoCasta Zamarripa
8th Assembly District

Rep. Josh Zepnick
9th Assembly District