



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

Legislative Update

The 2021-22 Legislative Session concluded last month, and attention is shifting to the spring and fall elections. Tomorrow is the spring election, and the fall election will be held Tuesday, November 8. Last month, Governor Evers asked the Legislature to meet in special session to consider his proposal to use the state's surplus funds for education funding, but Republican legislative leaders gavelled in and immediately adjourned the session without discussion.

2021-22 Legislative Session

PROFS registered in favor of the following bills and lobbied for their passage. Governor Tony Evers signed them into law last month:

- [Senate Bill 557](#) allows the university to manage some of its own investment funds rather than have them managed by the State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB) in low-return investments, now Act 165.
- [Assembly Bill 775](#) requires the State Building Commission to allocate \$1 million from the state building trust fund for planning and design services for a new UW-Madison Engineering Building, now Act 206.
- [Senate Bill 605](#) adds "graduate health science classes" to the list of other professional school classes that have the flexibility to determine their own fall semester start date, now Act 159.

PROFS is registered against several bills this session that are part of a national trend to introduce legislation meant to widen partisan divides and pit voters against one another on issues such as what can be taught and spoken about in public schools, colleges and universities; prohibiting transgender athletes from competition at the public K12 and post-secondary levels; and limits on COVID-19 policies. Members of the PROFS Steering Committee met with key legislators – including Representative Shelia Stubbs, Representative Francesca Hong, and Senator Kelda Roys – to assist with messaging and strategy in opposing some of these bills.

PROFS urges Governor Evers to veto legislation like [Senate Bill 409](#), part of the "anti-CRT" movement to restrict what can be taught and discussed at universities, and [Assembly Bill 884](#), which would place language in state statute prohibiting public universities from requiring diversity and ethnic studies.

Elections

Tomorrow is the statewide Spring Election, but there are no statewide offices on the ballot. Many voters will have municipal and school board candidates to consider. The fall primary on August 9 will determine constitutional and legislative candidates for the November ballot. There are 3 major Republican candidates in the race to face Governor Tony Evers on the ballot, and Democrats have a crowded field to challenge Senator Ron Johnson in November. There is also a Democratic primary for Lt. Governor as Mandela Barnes is running in the Senate primary.

Many state legislators have also retired, leaving many seats open. Legislators leaving the Capitol include Senators Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) and Republican Senators Dale Kooyenga (Brookfield) and Roger Roth (Appleton) who chaired the Senate Universities and Technical Colleges Committee. More than a dozen members of the Assembly are giving up their seats, some to retirement and some are running for other offices. Locally, Rep. Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton) is leaving the Assembly to run for the Senate seat left open due to the retirement of Sen. Jon Erpenbach.

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