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May Legislative Update

Legislature

While the Legislature continues to hold occasional public hearings, the body is not currently in session and is unlikely to vote on legislation before the fall elections. Legislative maps are set, and attention has shifted to who is running this fall. Many legislators both houses have announced they are not running for re-election – eight in the Senate and 22 in the Assembly at last count. While next year's Legislature will have many new members, experts agree that the political composition of both houses will remain similar due to political gerrymandering.

Elections

The fall primary on August 9 will determine constitutional and legislative candidates for the November ballot. With the [addition of Hartland businessman Tim Michels](#), there are now four major Republican candidates in the race to face Governor Tony Evers on the ballot.

Democrats have a crowded field to challenge Senator Ron Johnson in November, with Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes, Milwaukee businessman Alex Lasry, State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski, and Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson. Barnes' Senate candidacy leaves open the Democratic Lieutenant Governor spot. State Representatives David Bowen and Sara Rodriguez and Madison non-profit leader Peng Her have announced their candidacies.

PROFS is watching several races that may impact UW-Madison. Madison area legislators Senator Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) and Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb) have announced their retirements, as have Senators Dale Kooyenga (R-Brookfield), a member of the Joint Finance Committee, and Roger Roth (R-Appleton), chair of the Senate Universities and Technical Colleges Committee. Representative Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton) is leaving the Assembly to run for the Senate seat left open due to Erpenbach's retirement.

State Legislative Forum

Last week, PROFS and ASPRO co-hosted an in-person panel discussion on the recently completed 2021-22 Legislative Session. The panel discussed implications of the session for the university and looked forward to what may happen after the 2022 elections, including what UW-Madison needs from the state to remain a top public research university. Video from the forum is on the [PROFS YouTube channel](#).

The panel:

- [State Senator Kelda Roys](#) (D-Madison)
- [State Senator Joan Ballweg](#) (R-Markesan)
- [UW Regent Amy Blumenfeld Bogost](#)
- [UW-Madison Economics Professor Ananth Seshadri](#)

[Jessie Opoien](#), Cap Times Capitol Bureau Chief, moderated.

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