



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

August Legislative Update

PROFS, the Public Representation Organization of the Faculty Senate, is a non-profit advocacy organization of UW-Madison faculty. Formed by the Faculty Senate and governed by the University Committee, PROFS provides a voice to faculty, allowing them to communicate directly with the governor, legislators, and members of Congress.

2023-25 State Budget

The Wisconsin biennial budget process is a months-long process that begins early in odd years and concludes sometime in the summer. In meetings with the governor's office and key state legislators, PROFS made the case for paid family leave, pay raises for faculty and staff, increased overall funding for the university, and much-needed building projects.

[Governor Evers Budget Proposal](#)

The 2023-25 budget began with the state projected to have a record \$7 billion surplus. Democratic Governor Tony Evers' plan for the 2023-25 state budget reflected the surplus and called for a record K-12 budget, over \$1 billion in middle-class tax cuts, a substantial increase in aid to local governments, \$305 million for UW System, and almost \$250 million to seed a new family and medical leave program for public and most private sector employees. The governor also included pay raises of 5% in the first year of the biennium and 3% in the second year for state employees, including UW-Madison faculty; funding to continue UW System's Wisconsin Tuition Promise; and funding for a new UW-Madison Engineering Building and a new arts facility, and renovation of Music Hall.

[Alternative Republican Budget](#)

Republicans, who control the Wisconsin Legislature with large majorities, immediately and loudly criticized the governor's proposal and rejected Evers' plan and [opted](#) to use the current 2021-23 state budget as a starting point. Ultimately, the GOP budget proposal removed the proposed new funding for UW System and instead cut UW System's budget by \$32 million and added language that required UW System institutions to eliminate almost 200 positions relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They also opted not to fund a new UW-Madison Engineering building, shocking community and business leaders in the state.

Instead, the GOP delivered large tax cuts that benefited the state's highest earners most and funded a compromise k-12 plan that increased public school funding by \$1 billion, but also increased funding for voucher schools. A bright spot for UW-Madison faculty and staff in the Republican budget was funding for a state [pay plan](#) providing for a 4% raise on July 1, 2023 and an additional 2% raise in July 1, 2024. The raises must still be approved by the Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER). PROFS recently sent a letter to the JCOER co-chairs encouraging them to meet as soon as possible to take up the pay plans so faculty and staff receive the 4% pay increases retroactively to July 1 soon.

[Governor Evers Veto of DEI provision](#)

Wisconsin governors have one of the strongest partial veto authorities in the country. With his veto of the 2023-25 state budget, Governor Evers was able to eliminate the cut of DEI positions. The UW System must still go back to the Legislature with a plan for workforce development in order to restore a \$32 million cut.

Legislation PROFS is Following

- [AB 67/SB 84](#), *Merit Scholarship Bill*, PROFS registered in favor of these bills and was present when signed into law by the governor. The legislation eliminated the sunset date for \$5,000 merit scholarships for qualified UW students.
- [AB 19/SB 27](#), *Spinal Cord Research Bill*, PROFS registered in favor of these bills which directs the Department of Health Services to create a research grant program that would fund research on spinal cord injuries and rehabilitation.
- [AB 26/SB 8](#), *UW MIA Identification Project Bill*, PROFS is registered in favor of this legislation which awards the UW-Madison MIA Project \$180,000 in each year of the 2023-25 biennium.
- [AB 378/SB 377](#), *Restrictions on Transgender Athletes Bill*, PROFS is registered against these bills which would require transgender athletes to participate in sports that match the sex in which they were assigned at birth.

PROFS is also actively lobbying on and monitoring legislation that is expected to be introduced this session:

- Gun safety legislation
- Legislation that would prohibit state employees from abortion training
- Legislation relating to campus speech and academic freedom

PROFS Lobbies for Paid Family Leave

PROFS continues to lobby for paid family leave for UW-Madison employees and supports paid family leave for all workers – public and private sector. While Gov. Evers included paid family leave for state employees and most private sector workers in his budget proposal, GOP leaders have removed all policy items, including paid family leave, from the budget. PROFS will support separate legislation providing paid family leave and is working with UW-Madison leaders on ways in which the university may provide paid parental leave to employees, using HR authority given to the university by the state. Our statement on paid family leave is on the [PROFS website](#).

Join PROFS!

PROFS is funded entirely through modest monthly contributions from faculty and needs the support of all faculty to be most successful. Please use the form on the [PROFS website](#) to join. New members will receive a PROFS mug as a thank you.

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