



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Technical Colleges in support of September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1

October 11, 2023

PROFS, the Public Representation Organization of the (UW-Madison) Faculty Senate, represents the interests of the UW-Madison faculty. As leaders, teachers, and researchers at the university, the UW-Madison faculty have played a critical role in making UW-Madison the important powerhouse that it is today.

PROFS encourages committee members to support September 2023 Special Session Senate Bill 1. Among the bill's provisions are the following initiatives that will benefit UW-Madison, its faculty and staff, the students who attend the university, and the people of the state.

Funding for a new UW-Madison Engineering Building: A new UW-Madison Engineering Building is desperately needed to address the demand for Engineering majors and STEM education generally. It is essential for maintaining the quality of the university and stimulating economic growth in the state. The university has secured more than \$100 million in private commitments for the project, but this private support will not wait forever if the Legislature fails to act. Under the bill, the project will be enumerated with a budget of \$347 million, including \$197 million of segregated revenue from the capital improvement fund and \$150 million of gifts, grants, and other receipts.

More GPR funding for UW: Just like businesses and individuals, UW as an enterprise is struggling with inflation. The UW needs to be able to pay its bills and plan for the future. The UW needs as much state support (General Purpose Revenue) as possible. The bill will provide \$22 million more GPR in 23-24 and \$44 million GPR in 24-25 for the UW System's general operations appropriation.

More financial aid for UW students: The bill will help Wisconsin students and their families pay for a UW education by increasing funding for UW System Wisconsin Grants, funded through the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB), by 5% in 23-23 and another 5% in 24-25. The bill will also increase financial aid for students attending technical colleges, tribal colleges, and private nonprofit colleges.

Creation of a Family and Medical Leave Benefits Insurance Program: PROFS has long advocated for paid family and medical leave for faculty and other employees. The provision in the bill will create a program to provide paid leave to employees in both the public and private sectors in Wisconsin.

PROFS encourages committee members to meet soon to vote the bill out of committee and pass it through both houses of the Legislature. Thank you for considering the views of the UW-Madison faculty.