



*Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.*

PROFS Statement on Recent Actions by the Trump Administration

Over the last four weeks, PROFS has been monitoring the devastating changes that the Trump Administration is implementing and attempting to implement at the federal level, through executive orders and other administrative actions.

A number of these changes have the potential to have drastic effects on UW-Madison and universities across the United States. Others will dramatically change the United States' relationships with other countries, slash the positions of federal employees doing important work, eliminate whole units and departments, and gut many of the programs that support students, families, and the most vulnerable in our country.

Among the most significant changes for UW-Madison has been the plan to reduce overhead costs on Federal grants to 15 percent of the grant amount, which would significantly reduce available funding to the university; stop-work orders on a number of grants, including international and DEI-related grants; and the rescission of higher education sustainability and environmental initiatives.

The executive orders also have the effect of undermining Title IX protections for transgender students, have thrown into doubt international students' ability to easily acquire visas to study here, and have raised the possibility of aggressive actions on campus to identify and detain those who the government believes to be undocumented. While some of these changes have been delayed in the courts, new changes occur every day, making it difficult for the university, and for PROFS, to prioritize how it will push back against these actions.

And that's the point – the Trump administration's executive orders are part of a larger strategy to undermine higher education itself, and their kitchen-sink approach is meant to sow chaos. And while the President has disavowed it, the Trump administration's actions follow the Project 2025 playbook, whose higher education section is essentially a roadmap to put an end to higher education as we've known it in this country since the GI Bill.

To that end, PROFS is working with the Wisconsin Congressional delegation in Washington, DC, to make clear the effects of the Trump executive orders and other actions, and we intend to take an all-of-the-above strategy. Rather than fighting off the changes one by one, or trying to decide which have the greatest negative effects, PROFS is working to impress upon our allies, both in Washington and here at the State Capitol, that the actions undertaken by the current administration are nothing less than an existential threat to the university and to universities across the country, and that its cost will be measured in the US's preeminent position in education and knowledge production across the globe.

UW-Madison will, of course, be here in 50 years; but what it looks like may well be shaped by how we, and our university leadership, respond to the attack on the university and other important social and economic programs in the weeks, months, and years ahead. We would urge them to respond forcefully and fearlessly.

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Public Representation Organization of the Faculty Senate University of Wisconsin–Madison

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