

To: Senator Alberta Darling, Co-Chair, Joint Finance Committee  
Rep. Robin Vos, Co-Chair, Joint Finance Committee

From: Ray Cross, Chancellor, UW Colleges and UW-Extension

Date: February 16, 2011

Re: Impacts of Budget Repair Bill

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We understand the scope and seriousness of the budget deficit and appreciate the hard work of the governor and you to find solutions for the budgetary shortfall.

The work of the UW Colleges and UW-Extension, two of the UW System's primary access institutions, embodies the Wisconsin Idea by bringing the education and resources of the University to all residents of the state.

As chancellor of these institutions, I feel it is my duty to inform you of the **impacts the proposed budget repair bill will have on our faculty and staff statewide:**

- The average starting salary of a UW Colleges or UW-Extension faculty is significantly below peer institutions.
- The eight mandated furlough days decreased these lower salaries and the salaries of all our faculty and staff by 3.25%.
- Increased contributions to health insurance and pension would further harm all these employees by reducing their take home pay further. This will cause incredible financial hardship for the majority of our employees.
- For three months, our employees would be hit doubly hard.

Some **additional impacts to the state** to bring to your attention are the following:

- The children of some of our PhD faculty are already participating in free school lunches, a taxpayer-supported program. The changes in this budget repair bill will increase this number.
- Eliminating access to health insurance for limited-term employees could mean some families need to seek Badger Care, a taxpayer-supported program.
- The ripple effect of these cuts will also negatively impact the businesses and retail stores that state employees support around the state.

Similar to the governor, Joint Finance Committee members, and other statesmen and stateswomen around the state, we are conscientious stewards of public and private funds and are willing to help you solve these complicated financial issues in a way that will not single out an employee group.

Together, we must look for long-term solutions that will benefit Wisconsin. This means investing in and developing the human resources required for successful economic development in communities throughout Wisconsin. We need to recruit and hire faculty/staff who can teach the skills needed by future engineers, doctors, nurses, teachers, IT professionals, accountants, and entrepreneurs who will contribute to and fuel a robust Wisconsin economy.

