

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE-
TESTIMONY FROM WAUSAU

Senators **Burke,**
Decker,
Moore,
Shibilski,
Plache,
Wirch,
Darling, and
Rosenzweig

Representatives Gard, 308 East
Kaufert, 324 East
Albers, 320 East
Duff, 306 East
Ward, 321 East
Huebsch, 305 East
Huber, 218 North
Coggs- 214 North

Senator Jauch

Representatives

Friske- 312 North
Petrowski- 4 West

DOA

Fiscal Bureau



University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

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**Testimony of Thomas F. George
Chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point**

**Joint Finance Committee Hearing: Special Session Assembly Bill 1
Wednesday, February 20, 2002**

Good Morning.

On behalf of the students, alumni, faculty and staff at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, I want to thank the committee for this opportunity to speak. While I have had the honor to meet and work with many members of Joint Finance, including co-chairs Burke and Gard, I want to thank the committee for holding such a hearing in Central Wisconsin. Good morning as well to our own area delegation including Senators Decker and Shibilski and Representative Huber.

As chancellor at UWSP, I am well aware of the economic situation the state now faces. I come before you today fully understanding this state's budget shortfall.

Governor McCallum's proposed \$51 million reduction in GPR for the UW System will have a direct impact on both traditional student and non-traditional student access at UWSP. In addition, our economic stimulus package for the region, the Central Wisconsin Idea (CWI), will not be able to meet projected targets for expansion of programs and student enrollees. It is through the CWI that UWSP and its partners among the UW Colleges in Marshfield and Wausau, the technical colleges in Stevens Point, Wausau and Wisconsin Rapids, and business leaders in Portage County and Wausau have been able to bring greater access to higher education through distance technology to our large service area, which covers an extensive portion of our state from Portage to Rhinelander, from Waupaca to Marshfield. Cuts to the UW budget will hinder the development of this very beneficial program with its numerous partnerships.

Economists tell us UWSP's economic impact on Central Wisconsin is approximately one-third of a billion dollars annually. UWSP is not only a key educational institution for central and northern Wisconsin, but is also a major part of the overall economic health of the region.

Since July 1 of 2001 UWSP has:

- cut nearly \$225,000 of GPR, which has already reduced our instructional capacity;
- lapsed \$115,000 from our operations base;
- placed on hold a dozen faculty openings that would have gone to staff the Central Wisconsin Idea initiative.

We are now facing an additional lapse of \$325,000 to our operations base. Further cuts by either this committee or the full Legislature will undoubtedly lead to more staff reductions and reduced student access in the coming months.

Spending for other state agencies, such as corrections, have gone up the past decade. Conversely, the UW System's budget has remained stagnant. This is a troubling trend that fails to uphold the historical commitment made to the Wisconsin Idea and to the children of our state.

While we are not pleased with any budget cuts, other budget proposals under debate would without a doubt do greater short-term and long-term harm to this and other UW System campus' economic stimulus efforts.

If Wisconsin is serious about graduating students prepared for the challenges of the 21st Century, while substantially raising the median income of its citizens, then we must continue to invest in this state's greatest asset – our students.

Thank You.

Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

2/20/02

My name is Bonnie Edholm, I am 44 years old and the Mother of two daughters ages 12 and 14. On March 21, 2001 my life changed when my Husband unexpectedly passed away at the age of 45. In response to our tragedy and the need to provide for myself and two children I enrolled at Mid State Technical College to pursue a long time interest in the career of nursing. As I continue to pursue required courses I have felt confident of my financial status and ability to complete the program within a reasonable amount of time, however, the current cut backs will cause great distress on my financial situation and possibly diminish my hopes to fulfill my dream.

I am currently number ~~110~~¹⁰⁸ on the waiting list and have only one general science class to complete after this semester. I am academically in position to begin the nursing core classes as early as next fall, however there is no room for me to enter the program. Prior to cutbacks I had a very real hope that possibly January 2003 would be realistic, now even that hope is gone without government funding for the expansion of the program.

I am not sure what direction I will take or if I can wait for my number to come up. I can only ask you to reconsider your decision and help promote and encourage those of us so ready to serve our community and the State of Wisconsin in this much needed profession.

Bonnie Edholm
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Center for Urban Initiatives and Research

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 Milwaukee, WI
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 414 229-5916 phone
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February 14, 2002

Wisconsin Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs
 c/o Mr. Martin Stein
 Stein Optical
 1800 East Capitol Drive
 Milwaukee, WI 53211

Dear Mr. Stein:

The Center for Urban Initiatives and Research (CUIR) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee entered into a contract with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Wisconsin in February 2000 to provide evaluation services for the Targeted Outreach program. Although we are in the middle of the process of data analysis, we are able to share at this time certain results relating to some of the specific goals of the Targeted Outreach program.

The goals for the Targeted Outreach program were to identify 1300 at risk children, reduce further involvement with law enforcement, maintain or improve school performance and build self-esteem. Targeted Outreach was funded through TANF funds from January 2000 to December 2001. The program existed in 26 locations throughout the state.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Goal: | Enroll 1300 at risk youth in the program. |
| Result: | A total of 1999 youth participated over the course of the first two years of the program. At the close of 2001, 1408 youth were actively enrolled. |
| Goal: | Promote active participation in programming to avoid negative behaviors. |
| Result: | In an average month, 56% of youth attended clubs two or more times per week; 32% attended clubs four or more times per week. |
| Goal: | Maintain or improve scholastic performance. |
| Result: | Among youth for whom academic performance was tracked (77% of youth), 73% maintained school grades, and 23% improved their grades. Forty-two percent (42%) of youth participated in tutoring programs |
| Goal: | Improve self-esteem and leadership. |
| Result: | 6650 occurrences of achievement in club (2137), volunteering (3053), or assignment of responsibility within club (1460) were documented. |

- Goal:** Reduce involvement with law enforcement
Result: Over half these at risk youth were referred to the program by law enforcement, schools, or other local agencies. Studies have shown that of all Boys and Girls Clubs participants who had previous criminal activity, 72% had no further involvement with law enforcement. In the Targeted Outreach program, contact with police was reported for only 5% of participants.
- Goal:** Target at risk children of poor, working parents.
Result: All children in Targeted Outreach met TANF poverty eligibility criteria.

As part of the evaluation, CUIR worked closely with the Boys and Girls Clubs to develop an alternative to the cumbersome and unreliable method of collecting individual monthly tracking forms on paper that was in effect at the start of the program. In its place, CUIR and the Boys and Girls Clubs implemented an internet-based tracking system that both reduced the time required for data collection and increased the quality of the data that were collected. This system could serve as a model for future data collection efforts that involve multiple program sites.

A great many more results from the analysis of the Targeted Outreach data will be available in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me with any questions at 414-229-5928, or pem@uwm.edu.

Sincerely,



Peter Maier
Associate Director
Principal Investigator, Boys and Girls Clubs Targeted Outreach Evaluation

cc: Phil Jachowicz
Sharon Cook
Wally Graffen

WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Affiliated with the National Education Association

*Every kid
deserves a
Great School!*

Joint Finance Committee Testimony
Terry Craney, Past President
Wisconsin Education Association Council
February 20, 2002

I am Terry Craney. I am an instructor at the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and I just completed two terms as president of the Wisconsin Education Association Council. I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you about how essential education—both K-12 and technical college education—are to everyone: children, parents, grandparents, businesses and taxpayers. We all deserve great schools.

In your deliberations on the budget deficit, I am asking you to keep education—both K-12 and Wisconsin technical colleges—a priority. Here's why:

For nearly a decade, the state-imposed QEO law and revenue caps have forced K-12 schools to make even more drastic cuts. Any further cuts to K-12 would force school boards to make more and very drastic cuts to programs and staff in Wisconsin's great schools. Cuts to K-12 are shortsighted. They would cause long-term damage to schools, children and our economy. The long-term growth of Wisconsin's economy depends on a continued investment in our great public schools.

Wisconsin's technical colleges are also a sound investment in economic growth. They are the backbone of Wisconsin's economy, providing a great return on taxpayers' investment. They provide

Stan Johnson, President
Michael A. Butera, Executive Director

classrooms that work for hundreds of thousands of Wisconsin residents seeking education and training for new jobs; or retraining for career advancement.

Let me briefly provide a few facts about how important Wisconsin's technical colleges are to the state's economy:

- Each year technical colleges work with more than 4,400 employers to train skilled workers and retool the work force.
- Technical colleges are a good investment for taxpayers. Technical college graduates create more than \$2 in new tax revenue for every tax dollar invested in them.
- Technical college graduates are productive employees who stay in Wisconsin, contributing to the economy and helping to build strong communities.
 - More than 95% of all Wisconsin's technical college graduates are employed within six months of graduation.
 - Technical college graduates have increased earning capacity, contributing to a strong economy and society.
- Technical colleges are especially important for training and re-training during difficult economic times. Technical colleges see enrollments jump during economic downturns. In the recession that hit between 1979 and 1983, technical college enrollments jumped 23% and during the downturn between 1988 and 1992, technical college enrollments were up 11%.

The Wisconsin Technical College System cannot meet the increased demand for education and training under the proposed Consumer Price Index property tax levy cap and state aid cuts proposed

in the budget reform bill, or under the cuts proposed in other budget deficit plans. In fact, the property tax levy cap and state aids cuts will force technical colleges to cut staff and close down classrooms.

Please consider the investment opportunity. Make our great schools—both K-12 and Wisconsin technical colleges—a priority as you deal with the state budget deficit.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today.

Testimony of

Crystal S. Heckert

UW-Marathon County

On the

Budget Adjustment Bill

Members of the committee:

My name is Crystal Heckert and I am a freshman student at the University of Marathon County in Wausau. Today I come before you to express my concerns and the concerns of others about the readjustment of the current budget.

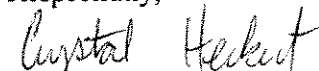
The current Budget Adjustment Bill holds an increase of 10% in college tuition, but does not hold equal increase in the amount of financial aid. It is a stated fact that for every \$100.00 increase in tuition, there is a 2.2% decrease of enrollment of low-income students. While I am not one of these students, I depend on financial aid to help me pay my way through college. Along with myself, I have two sisters and a brother who are also currently enrolled in college. My parents do not have the funds to pay for all of us to receive the college education that they did not have the opportunity to receive. They have supported all of us in our decisions to attend college, and help us in any way they can. But again, there is no possible way that they could afford to pay for all of us to receive a higher education. Therefore, we are all paying for our own educations without the help of our parents.

That is why it is so important not to cut the funding that is required for the continuation of a higher education, and to support the University of Wisconsin System that provides a quality education. Today there are more and more applicants for the limited financial aid resources, with fewer and fewer rewards available. I understand the importance of a balanced budget and its influence on the economy of our state, but I urge you to remember that the future economy of our state depends on the students of today.

In 2000 the average student in the UW System graduated \$15,314 in debt, more than double from 1985. Each year the average student has \$1,585 of unmet need with the help of financial aid and expected family education. These figures do not include the cost of everyday living expenses like food. I am very fortunate to be living at home during these first few years of college. I am able to bring food from home and eat it here. However, there are many students that do not have the same ability. There are many students that are forced to choose whether or not they will be eating lunch. This is unfair to them and a choice they should not have to make. Again, an increase in financial aid linked to the increase of tuition would be able to help many students from having to make this choice.

I respect that the committee has taken the time to listen to the students, and I thank you for that. I urge you to take the students and the benefits associated with the investment into the UW System into consideration when you decide the best way to balance the current budget. Remember, fighting for tomorrow's economy starts with financial aid today.

Respectfully,



Crystal Heckert
2288 Esker Rd. Hatley, WI 54440
crsheck6@uwc.edu

Joint Committee on Finance

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Yonke. I am a freshman student here at University of Wisconsin Marathon County. Also, I am the Executive Director of the UWMC Student Association and Academic Policy Senator for the Student Governance Council, which is the governing body for all thirteen UW two-year colleges. Today, I am here to represent myself and other students just like me who are concerned about Governor McCallum's Balanced Budget Proposal and its affect on students.

While, I know that tuition has to go up, but it should only go up with the rise of inflation, however the governor's plan on raising it ten percent is unacceptable. That ten percent increase may be the determining factor on if I attend school next year or not, especially if Financial Aid does not rise accordingly with the tuition.

Financial Aid is the best investment that the Federal or State government can make. It is an investment toward the future of our state and country as a whole. So if tuition rises Financial Aid has to cover that increase, it is one of the best uses for our taxpayers' money. After all, the fight for tomorrow's economy starts with financial aid today.

Respectfully,



Shannon Yonke
UW-Marathon County Student Association—Executive Director
Academic Policy Senator—Student Governance Council
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TESTIMONY OF
Kanyour Chang
UW-Marathon County
On the
Budget Adjustment Bill
February 20, 2002

Hello, my name is Kanyour Chang and I am a sophomore student attending at UWMC and I am also the Multicultural Affairs Director for our student government. I am here to represent students, like myself, who depend on financial aid, just to be able to go and have a higher education.

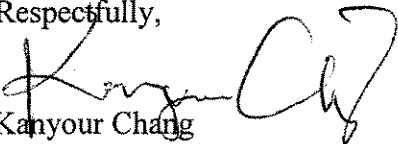
Governor McCallum's budget calls for a 10% increase in cost of tuition will greatly affect students who receive and don't receive financial aid, for what they say about college students is true, we are poor.

I, myself, come from a large family that can't spare the money to have one person be sent to college because every dollar counts. Therefore I depend upon the financial aid I receive. It may not matter if the cost of tuition increases 10% because I receive financial aid but the 10% increase won't be in conjunction with financial aid.

A person like me doesn't know anything about a person, who goes without financial aid, you may say, but two of my best friends don't receive financial aid and I could really claim that they have gone through a lot just to save up for one semester. For tuition money isn't a luxury but a gift of a lifetime. For knowledge is their gift for going to college and making something better for themselves.

Therefore I strongly ask you to consider supporting higher education for the present and future of our state, workforce, and economy.

Respectfully,



Kanyour Chang

UW-Marathon County Student Association- Multicultural Affairs Director
518 S. 7th Ave. Wausau, WI 54401-5396
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Testimony of

Elsa Duranceau

UW- Marathon County

On The

Budget Adjustment Bill

Members of the committee:

My name is Elsa Duranceau. I am the Public Relations Director for the UWMC Student Association. As the PR Director, I am the voice of our student body. I personally do not receive financial aid. I do, however, have to pay for my tuition. I come to you to show my concern on the effect of the 10% tuition increase on the student body.

In the market world in which we live, I am the consumer and higher education is the product. With education being the product, and having a 10% increase, as the consumer, I will have to work more in order to have the product. Education is a high maintenance product, meaning that the consumer has to put forth a large amount of time and effort in order to benefit from its rewards. If I, as the consumer, have to spend more time at work, my product is not being used in the correct manner, and essentially being a waste of time and money. In other words, by having to put in more time at work to receive an education, I cannot put forth my full potential to my studies. This does not just refer to me as a single person, but to the entire student body.

Higher education is not a gift handed to people, but something that needs to be worked for. There are many worthy people in our community that cannot attend school because the tuition rate has generally succumbed the rate of inflation, making it extremely difficult to make ends meet. You are looking and speaking with the present generation. Ten years ago, people looked at us as the next generation who will someday be running our world, well, here we are, and this proposed 10% increase would be pushing your world leaders out of school.

I thank the committee for taking the time to listen to my testimony on behalf of myself and the UWMC student body. I ask you to consider the long-term effects on our community and success of our students. We are the next in line for professional work, and the proposed increase could cause someone great to miss the boat.

Respectfully,



Elsa Duranceau

527 Porter St

Wausau WI 54403

Statement of
James F. Veninga
Campus Executive Officer and Dean
University of Wisconsin Marathon County
Joint Finance Committee Hearing
February 20, 2002

Good morning! I'm Jim Veninga, Campus Dean here at UWMC, and it is my pleasure to welcome you. I'm pleased that you chose to hold this hearing at UWMC.

At UW-Marathon County, we share in the concern about the health of the Wisconsin economy. And I want to say upfront that we will do our part to share in the pain of this budget crisis.

We are, as you know, one of thirteen campuses of UW Colleges. Our primary mission is to provide the very best freshman-sophomore education possible, and more and more citizens of Wisconsin—traditional as well as non-traditional age—are coming to the UW Colleges to launch their university studies.

Last fall, UWMC reached an all-time high enrollment of 1,302, with a FTE enrollment of 966. We have experienced 62% growth from fall 1996.

With your encouragement and support, we have increased the numbers of adult students who are returning to higher education to enhance their skills and deepen their knowledge. More than 350 such students—27% of our student body—are now studying with us.

We are responding as quickly and efficiently as we can to both workforce and economic development needs in northcentral Wisconsin. In collaboration with UW-Stevens Point and Northcentral Technical College, we are developing programs and courses that speak directly to the growing need for more technologically sophisticated employees who possess the necessary skills and knowledge needed to function successfully in the New Economy.

But much of this progress is now at risk. Governor McCallum's proposed \$51 million cut represents a significant blow to the economic stimulus program as well as to our ongoing operations.

Here is what this means for UW Colleges:

- We will not be able to proceed with plans to add non-instructional staff in areas such as student services, libraries and information technology, to support the increase in students.
- Our ability to meet the needs of returning adult students through additional evening and weekend programs and staff will be diminished.

- Our goal to expand evening courses will be undermined.
- Funding for supplies and expenses related to our initiatives to reach more adult learners will be reduced.
- Plans to develop new courses to meet the needs of adult students and those in collaborative degree programs will be delayed.

Let me give you just one example of how this cut will play out on this campus.

Last fall we were able to open, through a very nice gift from Wausau Homes, a Writing Center designed to assist all students across the campus by offering both basic and intermediate writing skills courses and workshops. This gift brought computers and workstations and other equipment and furniture. Our goal, through funding from our Adult Access Initiative, was to expand the hours of the Center—late afternoon and evening—providing professional writing help to our non-traditional students. That now seems an unlikely possibility.

I also share our county's concerns with the plan to eliminate revenue sharing.

The UW Colleges are the product of a magnificent and carefully crafted partnership involving county and state governments. This facility belongs to Marathon County. This campus was built through the tax funds of the good citizens of this county because they believe in higher education and they know how important it is to have a branch campus of the University of Wisconsin System in this county.

The proposed deep cuts in local aids will not only affect county services, but will have a big impact on needed capital improvements here at UWMC. Improvements like remodeled science labs that are needed to meet current and future enrollments.

I can assure the members of this Committee that we are willing to do our part to help with the current budget crisis. But unlike fabled magicians, we are not able to pull rabbits out of the hat. We cannot develop evening programs and support services for adult learners unless there is revenue to do so. We cannot improve science labs without a Marathon County that is in sound fiscal shape, willing to invest in updated facilities.

I urge you to remember the importance of higher education to the quality of life of this state and to its economic future.

Your consideration of these concerns will be deeply appreciated.

PRINCIPALS:

EDWARD J. HARRIS
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

BRYAN YENTER
MIDDLE SCHOOL

KATHY GJESFJELD
ELEMENTARY

JEFFREY KOENIG
TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR

School District of Chetek

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AL BROWN, Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

MARK SHERMAN, PRESIDENT
BETH UNBEHAUN, VICE PRESIDENT
GENIE JENNINGS, CLERK
ALAN SIEPIERSKI, TREASURER

DIRECTORS:

OSCAR SKOUG
JAMES DENNIS
KEN JOST

DATE: February 20, 2002

TO: Joint Finance Committee

RE: Governor McCallum Budget Adjustment Bill

Thank you for the opportunity to address your committee today. I come before you to request that you support the Governor's proposal to fund education as a major priority in the state budget. I would like to thank this committee for your efforts to maintain the high priority you have given education in the past. I would also respectfully ask you to oppose legislation that would undo our past efforts. The education of our children is our future as a community and as a state.

I am the district administrator for the School District of Chetek. This is a rural school district located 45 miles north of Eau Claire on Highway 53. Our local industries are small manufacturing, agriculture and tourism. This interesting mix of occupations creates a very conservative approach to financial problem solving. Our school district is comprised of 1100 school aged children and serves approximately 900 families. We have a professional staff of 77, thirty-six support staff and five licensed administrators. These are fairly typical numbers for a district our size. The other characteristic we have in common with rural school districts is declining enrollments.

The combination of declining enrollment, increased property values and revenue structures has contributed to our own local shortfalls. Since the 1999-2000 school year we have had to deal with over 700,000.00 in budget cuts. The school board I work with and my administrative team knows first hand the leadership decisions you need to make in the near future. It is times like these when we find what we are truly made of. The Cameron School District to our north is also facing this type of shortfall. Dr. Howard Hanson is projecting \$250,000 to \$300,000 shortfall for next year. This is without making further accommodations for the state shortages, which would add another 150,000 dollars to these totals.

What impacts will a freeze on aids or levies have on education in Chetek? This freeze will reduce our operational budget \$250,000 and cause further reductions in staff and programs. Class size in non-SAGE classrooms would be 23-28 pupils per teacher, extra curricular opportunities will be reduced, travel and field trips will be eliminated and more staff will be laid off. Many small northwestern school districts are making tough choices. The additional stress of reduced state participation will have catastrophic results.

Small rural school districts have limited resources to "fall back on" in a time of crisis. We are all faced with tough decisions that will affect the lives of children and families within our community. As you move forward in your decision-making, realize that while financial shortfalls are new to the state, some small school districts have been dealing with shortages for some time.

I respectfully ask you to support our children and not compound the struggles of small rural school districts. I realize that in our leadership roles we must find solutions to many problems that are not of our choosing. But by being leaders we have to look to the future. The children of this state are our future. Please support public education: do not freeze or reduce the state educational budget. Please support the Governor's budget adjustment bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear, again, before this group.

Al Brown
Superintendent
School District of Chetek
1001 Knapp Street
Chetek, WI 54728
albrown@chetek.k12.

February 20, 2002

TO: Members of the Committee on Joint Finance

FROM: Heather Eldred, Director
Wisconsin Valley Library Service

RE: Governor's Budget Proposal

Thank-you for holding one of your budget hearings in the central part of the state.

My name is Heather Eldred and I am the director of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service. We serve about 275,000 people in the seven north central counties of Clark, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, and Taylor.

Libraries across the state are concerned about the elimination of revenue sharing funds and the subsequent impact on service. The probable result will be that libraries are not funded at the levels they have been. If that turns out to be the case, the libraries (and their supporting municipalities) will be out of compliance with the law that requires counties and municipalities to maintain their financial support of libraries at least at the average of the past three years. When libraries are out of compliance, the law requires systems to try to work with them to again achieve compliance but, if that can't be worked out, systems would eventually be forced to expel non-complying libraries. That would result in the breakdown of library systems around the state - or at least the creation of islands of under-served people. The Wisconsin Valley Library Service just marked its 40th year of service to area libraries and their users. What a shame, what a waste of taxpayer dollars it would be if the inter-agency, inter-community library service network we have built over four decades would now fall apart.

Don't be fooled by those who say that access to the Internet means that we don't need libraries anymore. Because of the Internet and BadgerLink and shared databases, we need libraries more than ever to share the resources which are purchased with state, local, and county tax dollars. The Internet doesn't pay for the courier services that allow the materials to be shared. The Internet doesn't provide the personal training services that teach people how to make good use of the resources. The Internet doesn't provide workshops to help library directors maintain their state-required certification. The Internet is a wonderful tool - but it will never replace the need for libraries and their networks.

As Director of this library system, my main concern is the Governor's recommendation that funding for library systems remains flat - or even takes a

5.5% cut – after a biennium of flat funding. We can't continue to provide statutorily required services to member libraries if the state doesn't provide adequate funding to do so. On top of flat funding, the distribution formula for state aid to library systems is woefully unfair. The law recognizes this and contains language that would trigger the implementation of a fairer distribution formula – but only when the state funds systems at least at the 11.25% level. The larger, more rural systems – those that serve the northern and western counties of Wisconsin are getting further and further behind. As an example of this unfairness, if the fairer distribution formula were in place, this library system would have received about \$170,000 more than we did this year.

Some may think I am foolish to stand here today and ask for more money at a time when everyone is looking for ways to cut spending - I don't think I am. I'm paid to make the best possible use of the tax dollars assigned to my library system. It is my responsibility to point out a major inequity in the state's funding of library systems.

It is incredibly important that I get the point across that, while the law recognizes that the current funding formula is grossly unfair (and contains language to correct the situation, nothing will be changed until the state increases system funding from its current level of a little less than 10% to 11.25%. The law says the formula won't change until the 11.25% funding level is reached so that those systems which have been overpaid for many years are 'held harmless' - not hurt financially.

Where is the fairness in continuing to under-fund over half of the systems in the state year after year just so that those who have been regularly getting more than their share won't get hurt? What about the systems who are being hurt every year?

I know that funding is tight for this next budget but I also know that open access to information and sharing by agencies which operate on tax dollars is of utmost importance. Library systems are excellent examples of sharing across municipal borders - and dollars are available – it's just a matter of setting priorities.

Thank you for the opportunity for input into this budget process.

NOTE:

The exact amount of additional dollars that would be needed to reach the 11.25% funding is available from the office of Al Zimmerman at the Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning. His phone number is 608-266-3939.

Northcentral Technical College Referendum Questions & Answers

- **Why does NTC need a referendum?** Our community is changing and we need to change with it or be left behind. A cutting edge workforce is what differentiates any region today and we must keep pace with the rest of the world. Research and community input from various municipalities in our District indicate that in the next decade, there will be an increasing demand for better trained law enforcement officers and firefighters, more healthcare workers and technical workers with higher skill levels than in the past. Leading this demand are protective services graduates like police officers, firefighters, and EMTs along with healthcare workers like nurses, dental hygienists and x-ray technicians. Demand for these workers will jump by nearly 40 percent. Our community wants people in these positions to be knowledgeable and well educated. NTC must step up to meet that demand. Employers want workers with the most up to date skill sets so a worker can hit the ground running in law enforcement, nursing, computer technology and carpentry. Currently, while our communities and their needs have grown, NTC has stayed at relatively the same size. Our facilities will not be able to meet the increasing demand unless they are repaired, upgraded, and renovated to prepare students more fully for the 21st century. Area fire and police departments indicate they are finding that NTC's training facilities can only currently offer one third of the necessary training. The proposed referendum would address these needs and help provide the community with the skilled workers it wants and deserves.

- **How much would the referendum cost?** The referendum total is \$18.9 million and the cost to the homeowner of an average \$100,000 home in the 10-county NTC District would be approximately 71 cents a month or \$8.52 per year. District residents would see renovation, repair, and upgrading on the six campuses, the purchase of needed medical, surgical and dental equipment for the Health Sciences Center, and the construction of a Protective Services Center

District would be approximately 71 cents a month or \$8.52 per year. District residents would see renovation, repair, and upgrading on the six campuses, the purchase of needed medical, surgical and dental equipment for the Health Sciences Center and the construction of a Protective Services Center and Training Facility. Together, these components would expand the employee pool of qualified police officers, firefighters, nurses, welders, carpenters electricians, medical and dental hygienists and computer specialists for years to come.

- **What would the money be used for?** Of the \$18.9 million total, more than half, \$10.2 million, would be used to build NTC's Protective Services Center and Training Facility. This building and outdoor training area would include a crime laboratory, classrooms, defense and arrest tactics rooms, a SWAT/Anti-Terrorism Training area, mobile training labs, computer rooms, hazardous materials training, exterior burn practice towers, emergency vehicle driving courses, water rescue areas and more. As you may know, Congressman David Obey recently announced a federal appropriation of \$20 million to NTC and the community to build a Health Sciences Center at the NTC central campus in Wausau. This building will help address a serious nursing shortage in our area, helping to educate future nurses, surgical technicians, medical and dental hygienists, x-ray technicians and others. The NTC referendum would provide \$2.5 million to be used to supply the facility with state-of-the-art and permanent medical, dental, and surgical equipment needed to train our future and current healthcare workforce. Finally, \$6.2 million would be used to provide electrical, telecommunications, computer lab and safety and security upgrades at the six NTC campuses. Additional repairs and remodeling would create new learning spaces, enhance distance education through the Internet, and provide better learning areas at the six campuses. This effort would impact those studying information technology, construction trades, accounting, and also create potential new areas of needed study, including applied engineering, service management and more.

• **Why should I care about this referendum, my kids don't even attend NTC?** Your children may not go to NTC, but there's a good chance NTC touches your life in a number of ways you don't even realize. When you have blood drawn, chances are the nurse is an NTC graduate. If you've ever called the police or 911, the dispatcher was probably educated at NTC. There is a strong likelihood the electrician or carpenter who worked on your house learned his or her skills at NTC. That's why the economic boost NTC gives our communities is so significant. It is estimated that NTC's impact on the local economy is the equivalent of 4,100 full time jobs each year. That is about \$117 million. Seven out of every 10 students who graduate from NTC will stay, live, and work in our District contributing to the community for years to come. Each year, NTC graduates the people who care for us daily. That includes nurses, medical and dental hygienists, and EMTs. NTC also supplies the people who protect and serve us like law enforcement officers, firefighters, rescue crew and others. Many graduates in these professions inevitably return to NTC for continuing education and training in their fields. In fact, the average age of a student at NTC is 32 years old and is likely returning to upgrade the education and skill they already have, making a good career even better. While NTC may not be for everyone, it does affect nearly everyone in our District in one way or another.

• **What would the referendum do for NTC's regional campuses outside of Wausau?** NTC's regional campuses in Spencer, Medford, Antigo, Wittenberg, and Phillips are of great importance to our community and the students we serve in these outlying areas. Each facility has its own unique needs and each would benefit from the \$6.2 million earmarked for renovation, repairs, upgrades and remodeling. Areas targeted for improvement include safety and security and computer upgrades, enhanced distance education delivery and Internet connection service. Additional learning spaces would also be created, while all campuses would see improvements to electrical and telecommunications areas. Splash towers would be built for firefighter training in Spencer, Medford, Antigo and Phillips. Mobile training labs housed at the Protective Services Center would regularly travel to each of the

regional campuses, allowing many of our local volunteer fire departments to participate in continuing education in their respective areas without traveling. New programs in computer aided drafting, emergency dispatch, applied engineering, management and workplace languages could be offered along with enhancing existing programs like EMT, nursing, criminal justice, computer information systems, childcare, business, criminal justice and more. Upgrades at the regional campuses would also allow increased continuing education with satellite downlinks, workshops and business-to-business conferencing.

- **It seems pretty expensive overall. Why not wait a few more years?** The community need and the demand for this upgrade and expansion is now and in the near future. NTC has never asked for a referendum before, but all the research and community input indicates that to keep our students and graduates on the cutting edge of the skills needed for a 21st century workforce, NTC needs upgraded classrooms, buildings and equipment. The referendum will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home approximately 71 cents per month, which is less than the cost of one can of soda. The current state of the economy is good for construction and NTC has a strong reputation for spending dollars wisely. Our college is also in a very good fiscal situation with a strong bond rating. Our current bond rating is Aa3 by Moody's Investors Service and is among the best rates attainable by technical colleges.
- **I thought the \$20 million in federal money that will be used to build the new Health Sciences Center was the overall solution. Why does NTC need even more money?** The Health Sciences Center is one major component in addressing our community's needs. A serious nursing shortage will be greatly served by the construction of the Health Sciences Center. However, the Center itself will still need \$2.5 million in new medical, dental and surgical equipment and the referendum addresses that need. Additionally it is estimated that the demand for the training of not only healthcare workers, but police officers, firefighters, EMTs, rescue crews and others in the protective services will jump by 40 percent over the next decade in our community. A new \$10.2 million Protective Services Center and

Training Facility would address that need. Employers are continuing to demand a high level of skills and knowledge from those entering the workforce in the 21st century, and our campuses and services need upgrades, repairs and remodeling. Those studying information systems, carpentry, automotive technology, childcare, accounting, criminal justice, math, sciences and more would benefit from the \$6.2 million earmarked for these types of improvements to the six NTC campuses.

• **Are you sure you need all this additional space?**

While part of the referendum plan calls for upgrading, repairing and remodeling existing space, NTC is very aware of the demand in certain areas for additional space. There are current waiting lists for classes in nursing, while the College is only able to offer a third of the continued training and education necessary for law enforcement, firefighting and other protective services occupations. A Protective Services Center and Training Facility as well as the recently announced Health Sciences Center will allow for the integration of new technology and appropriate training areas to ensure NTC students are prepared to enter the 21st century workforce.

• **Why a Protective Services Center and Training Facility, why not a Welding Center or a Computer Building?**

Based on our research and community input, the need for skilled workers in these professions remains high, but the greatest need is in the area of protective services and healthcare. NTC will always train skilled welders, carpenters, computer and automotive technicians. These positions are of great value to our local community. Recent nursing and law enforcement need and shortages, however, are growing faster and NTC must respond. The referendum will help us respond. NTC would be denying its mission to serve the community's needs if it ignored the community demand for more workers and increased skill levels of graduating students in the fields of protective services and healthcare.

• **If the referendum passes, how long until building would begin?**

Renovation, repairs and upgrades would begin as soon as possible at the six campuses. The purchase of land and the planning of a new

Protective Services Center and Training Facility would take about a year with construction beginning in the spring of next year and completion about 10-12 months after that.

[[Back](#)]

Have questions or comments? Please contact us 1000 W.
Campus Drive, Wausau, WI 54401
1-888-NTC-7144 or 715-675-3331
Problems with our site please contact our webmaster

I am a student at NTC, here at the Wausau Campus. Like many, many other students, I have chosen a new career path. I am here today to ask you to please carefully weigh your input regarding funding our proposed **Health Sciences Center at our College.**

I'm sure you know, we are Wausau's "school of nursing"...and we've grown! As a matter of fact, did you know that currently there are 101 pre-nursing candidates on the wait list for the next round of classes? They are bright, capable, motivated students representing the 10 county area which our college supports—but they have to wait for seats. We've met all requirements for program admission, but classes are full.

And imagine this! There are 253 additional students who've *applied* for the very same Nursing Program....and still others interested in other Health Care Professions whom I've not counted. **Now, that's a need!**

Of course you know of the national demand for certified, experienced RN's. But did you know that regionally we are in need of qualified nurses?...with supporting data projected far into your future! Trade journals which I read tell me I can count on being in demand if I'm highly professional, capable, flexible and well educated! I have very high educational standards, having given up my teaching career. I chose a new adventure. And I am well-researched. Health professionals tell me that a Nursing School with remarkably high clinical exposure is the answer to providing excellent patient care. I feel confident knowing that I have the opportunity to graduate from this program knowing that I have had exposure to a broad range of clinical settings, and can apply the appropriate technical skills demanded because our student nurses are trained in an 8-to-1 student ratio.

This is my place! I want to train here, near my family, and donate to my local economy. It is important to contribute within our diverse population and to learn what skills are particularly needed right here. That's why I've chosen this College and I'll bet my classmates feel the same. Our professors tell us we are a motivated bunch. Like most workers in Central Wisconsin we possess high work ethics. We're a "going places" sort of class, and NTC is the place to go!

Please carefully reconsider the impact your opinions have on funding this system. It's a good thing. It's sound; it upholds high standards; the staff is committed and the administration is sincerely concerned. The mere numbers enrolled demonstrate the pressing need for more classroom space. And our aging population fully deserves more than adequate health services. I'm glad that sound health care is a prevailing concern of yours. Please continue to make educating health professionals at NTC a priority.

I'm pleased you choose to make the time to listen and to weigh these considerations.

Respectfully presented, Lisa Lucas

P.S. Should you happen to be out our way, there's room to squeeze in another stool at my lab table in Anatomy and Physiology. We'll fit you in-- and even buy you a cup of coffee! Stop in and see what we're all about!

Lisa Lucas
910 Adams
Wausau, 54403

Statement of
Christopher J. Robinson
Student Association President
University of Wisconsin Marathon County
Joint Finance Committee Hearing
February 20, 2002

Good morning, my name is CJ Robinson, and today, I come before you as the President of the University of Wisconsin Marathon County Student Association, but also as a student in pursuit of a degree in Business Administration with hopes of eventually attending law school. Although I have only a limited experience in the business world, I understand that given the status of Wisconsin's economy, the state is currently faced with a rather large budgetary shortfall. I also understand that students on this campus must take on their fair share of this financial burden.

Through my coursework in economics I recognize that there are many factors that may lead to an economy's fall into a recession. Although, economists may never know what exactly caused the economy plummet, most will agree that in order for the state to recover and reach its' economic potential, it must create a more productive worker.

Question: How does the state go about creating a more productive worker?

Answer: Through access to quality relevant education.

Governor McCallum's Balanced Budget Adjustment Bill calls for a 10% increase in the cost of tuition that would not be met by equal increases in financial aid. In addition, there is a proposal to cut UW-System's budget by \$51-million. As a student, it is easy for me to see that this bill threatens access to, and the quality of this relevant education.

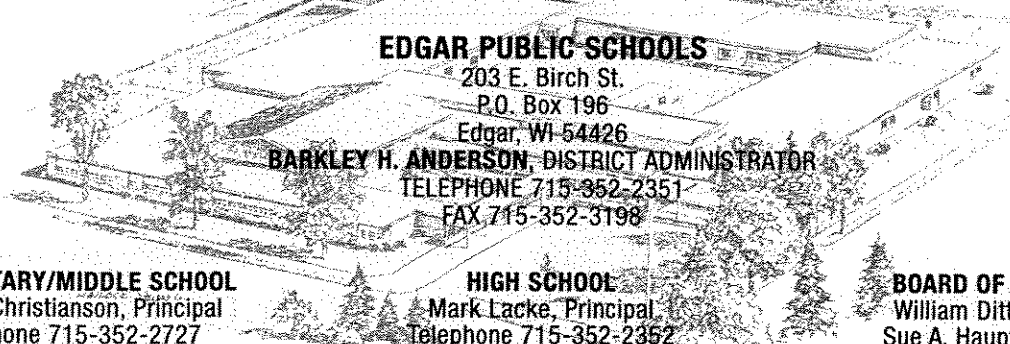
A 10% increase in the cost of tuition would most definitely prove to be detrimental to access to public higher education for many reasons. This large increase would come after the tuition on this campus is currently costs students slightly over 600% what it was at the inception of the UW-System in 1972. A recent study shows that for every \$100 increase in tuition, the UW-System sees a 2.2% decrease in the enrollment of low-income students. Additionally, the average debt upon graduation for UW students had more than doubled since 1985. It was estimated in 2000 that the average UW-system student graduated \$15,314 in debt. These figures will continue to inflate exponentially if tuition continues this ridiculous trend. I do understand that tuition does need to increase, but it is the belief of the students of the UW-System that these increases should be capped at or near the rate of inflation.

The fight for tomorrow's economy starts with financial aid today is a slogan that students from across the state have adopted when discussing the proposed budget cuts. This statement holds quite a bit of truth. Statistics show that for every one dollar the state invests in the University of Wisconsin System, the state sees a three-dollar return on their investment. Another study shows that the average UW-System student has \$1,585 in

unmet need. This number was derived at by including financial aid and scholarships, and did not include everyday living expenses such as food, transportation and health care. It is imperative that the gap of unmet need be narrowed. This can be done by ensuring that tuition increase be directly linked to increases in financial aid.

I urge you to support access to higher education to ensure that the future of the state's workforce will be productive and financially secure.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF EDGAR



ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL
Robert Christianson, Principal
Telephone 715-352-2727
Fax 715-352-3022

HIGH SCHOOL
Mark Lacke, Principal
Telephone 715-352-2352
Fax 715-352-3198

BOARD OF EDUCATION
William Dittman, President
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Carl Totzke, Member

DATE: February 20, 2002

TO: Joint Finance Committee

RE: Governor McCallum Budget Adjustment Bill

I thank you for the opportunity to present information regarding the budget adjustment. I recall in April 1997 I appeared before this same committee warning of the dangers of revenue caps and declining enrollments and what would eventually happen to school districts across the state. We have experienced the cutting of budgets and trying to provide quality academic programs with less resource.

I am the District Administrator of the Edgar School District. Edgar is located 20 miles west of Wausau and serves 670 students PK-12. We have 44 regular education teachers, 15 special education teachers and 17 support personnel.

The governor's budget proposal reducing the revenue cap formula from \$233.00 to \$210.00 would cost the Edgar School District \$15,410.00 revenue. A tax freeze would cost the Edgar District \$155,440.00. Any type of across the board cut in school aid or other revenue (Teach money) would also be costly to my district.

The Edgar School District needs increased revenues of \$135,000.00 minimum to break even. This is taking into consideration the 3.8% QEO for staff, support staff increase and vendor increase.

For the past several years, school districts have been operating with less. We have cut our budgets. Our mil rates have dropped from \$17.00 per thousand to \$9.50 per thousand.

In Edgar we went to referendum four times to increase our revenue cap. On the fourth try we were allowed to increase our revenue cap \$150,000.00. If the governor's proposal is enacted or others, we will lose what we have gained and will be looking for more program cuts.

The bottom line is we need a new source of revenue. We don't need local units of governments pitted against school districts. People expect quality education and they also expect the local services that towns, villages, and counties provide.

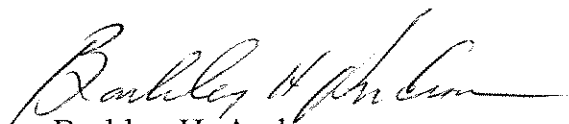
Increase the state sales tax. A .1% increase will raise 540 million dollars. Review the exemptions of the current state sales tax. Possibly there is revenue in an adjustment of the current corporate tax structure.

The state has been telling us for years they have more money than they really do. Does that sound familiar?

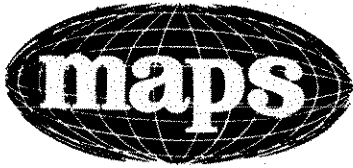
The final state aid payments have been delayed to the next fiscal year. An accounting adjustment. One time tobacco money doesn't work! The state needs to get its fiscal house in order.

Again, we need a new source of revenue so we can continue to provide quality services, whether for schools or local units of government.

Thanks for your time.



Barkley H. Anderson
Superintendent
Edgar Public Schools



Merrill Area Public Schools

1111 N. SALES STREET • MERRILL, WISCONSIN 54452-3198
715-536-4581 • 715-536-9421 • FAX 715-536-1788

Frank Harrington

Superintendent of Schools

Joint Finance Committee Hearing – February 20, 2002 - Wausau

Thank you for the opportunity for me to speak before you today. Last year, at the Marshfield JFC hearing, I gave some thoughts and a necktie which had embossed on it: "Kids Come First". This year I again have some concerns & ideas and a different necktie which depicts children riding on school buses. We must take a look down the long road leading to our future. Our children are that future.

At the Merrill Area Public Schools, during the past two years, we have reduced our budget in excess of \$650,000 – cutting both staff and stuff. Because we are a declining enrollment district we anticipate (under the traditional revenue cap formula) cutting something in excess of \$400,000 for next year.

On top of that there seems to be some consideration for altering the revenue cap formula –or- for freezing it –or- for looking at major cuts across the board for all entities. Because you do not know yet what the outcome of that discussion will be, and because my district is obligated to deal with staff contracts, as regards layoffs in anticipation of further state retrenchment, MAPS is looking at identifying an additional \$400,000 in cutbacks.

Now we are at \$800,000 in retrenchments, but the story is not over. Last week we received an estimate for our health insurance premium increase for next year. Based on our carrier's information we are looking at a 29.7% increase – approximately \$900,000. Much of this will be absorbed in the QEO by increasing the benefit portion and lowering the salary portion. However, the QEO (if it remains) does not apply to all of our employees. I am anticipating that there may be \$200,000 of insurance impact directly on the district as it relates to support staff.

Currently, we are attempting to identify \$1,000,000 in expenditure cutbacks for next year. Although we have some "stuff" as ideas to cut, those possibilities are very slim. Most of the cuts will be in staff.

My district has attempted to be responsive to the local taxpayer. We need significant improvements to six of our elementary buildings. In November MAPS took an 8.5 million dollar referendum to our constituents. They resounding defeated it. In January we considered another referendum, reducing the issue to less than 3 million dollars. However, the district was sensitive to the local taxpayers and decided to not hold the referendum. We will try to cobble together repairs for doors, windows, and HVAC systems on a \$100,000 annual maintenance budget.

I support the Governor's overall budget approach and have a few ideas regarding fiscal alterations. If capping debt service allocations would stave off reductions in general revenue appropriations, I would support such. Eliminating the cost and frustration of the on again/off again graduation test would be healthy and helpful. Please strike that legislation.

Finally, if there is anything you can do to cap the cost of insurance premiums, I would whole heartedly support such legislation. Those increased costs are going to put a lot of entities in serious financial straits.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Merrill board listens to people

There's no one thing that Merrill Superintendent Frank Harrington can put his finger on.

But there's a certain unmistakable tension in his community, and that's why the Merrill School Board shelved \$7.7 million worth of bonding requests.

There are needs. Plenty.

In some elementary schools, the windows are old and they leak. If they were opened, they'd fall out.

"They don't even make replacement stuff for some of these windows anymore, so we cobble things together," Harrington said.

But these are uncertain economic times.

"It's just all the little things put together," the superintendent said. "The aura that exists around the national economy, and of course the state budget."

Companies in Merrill aren't going belly-up, but there are nagging concerns, such as Theima's — the state's largest bridal and formal shop — leaving the downtown.

The nation's troubled companies — Enron, Kmart, etc. — are on people's minds.

Residents got their property tax bills in December, and Northcentral Technical College soon will ask for authority to borrow \$18.9 million. Then there's the long, drawn-out debate by

Subject: Public schools Wrong time to ask for money

the Lincoln County Board about how to comply with a judge's order to provide adequate space for the county's second court.

"Obviously, the county justice situation rests heavily with people because something's going to happen that'll cost some money," Harrington said.

And on the state level, Wisconsin faces a deficit of more than \$1 billion. With 40 percent of the state's funds going to local schools, that's worrisome.

The 1999-2001 contract with the Merrill School District's support staff was just recently settled, and they and the teachers don't have a contract for 2001-2003 yet. That's an issue.

The Merrill School Board took an \$8.5 million proposal to voters in November. It failed miserably.

It had wanted to go back to the voters again on April 2 and ask for \$5 million for elementary school expansions and \$2.7 million for maintenance. The board decided last week, however, that it couldn't.

While that could be seen as throwing in the towel, it's really something else — sensitivity to the community's condition.

So often we see school boards holding referendums time after time, heaping failure upon failure. They repeatedly misjudge the public's willingness to support bond issues. Such boards have lost touch.

By saying, "we hear you," the Merrill School Board is building faith with its constituents. That will serve it well in the future.

How long the youngest children in the district can be forced to cope with its worst conditions, now that the junior and senior high schools have been upgraded, is the question.

The superintendent doesn't expect the board to seriously consider asking for more money until the Legislature fixes the state budget and the economy revs up.

"We're at a point we (the schools) just have to suck it up a little bit more," he said.

But remember this, Merrill.

Whenever the board thinks it can wait no longer, recall that in April 2002 it listened to voters, and it didn't put its hand out then.

The deficiencies won't go away. The teachers will continue to carry boys and girls and their wheelchair up steps because there aren't any elevators. There's a tacit agreement here.

The board didn't want to overburden taxpayers now, but it'll need their full support the next time around. Please give it then.

**ANTICIPATED
Revenue Shortfall**

**POTENTIAL
Fiscal Retrenchment**

The MILLION DOLLAR question
for the 2002-2003 school year
for the
Merrill Area Public Schools

Anticipated \$400,000 loss due to declining enrollment
Anticipated \$400,000 loss due to state revenue freeze
Anticipated \$200,000 loss due to health insurance premium increase

Possible \$555,000 reduction in Professional Staff
Possible \$171,000 reduction in Support Staff
Possible \$219,000 reduction in "Stuff"
\$55,000 reduction yet to be determined

Hi, my name is Lisa Beck. I am here today, along with 30 other parents – all of us involved in Marathon County's Start Right Program. We are concerned because Governor McCallum has proposed budget cuts that are forcing counties to look at cutting prevention programs – programs that serve children.

First of all, you need to know that the Start Right Program is a seven-year old public/private partnership dedicated to improving the lives of all children in Marathon County. We work toward this goal through a network of eight family resource centers which offer group-based programs, as well as home-visiting services to all families in our county. In 2001, 4300 parents and children were served through Start Right's eight family resource centers. In addition, 480 new birth families received family visiting services in 2001. These 480 families translate into approximately 1920 parents and children.

Governor McCallum has said that he doesn't want to impact "vulnerable populations" with his cuts, yet we believe that because prevention programs are often the first to be cut when money is tight, that is exactly what may happen here in Marathon County.

As parents, children are our priority. This county has made decisions over the past eight years to demonstrate that children are a high priority. We want Governor McCallum's budget proposals to reflect that children are always a priority – not just when they're in school.

Prevention programs like Start Right support parents in those five years before a child reaches school and throughout the school years. Experts tell us that a child's pre-school experiences are critical to their later life successes - more critical than we ever imagined even ten years ago.

And the parenting challenges continue all the way through the school years.

We are proud of the Start Right family support network we have created here in Marathon County. Being a good parent is hard work and most of us want information and support over the course of our parenting careers. Governor McCallum's proposed reductions in revenue sharing greatly jeopardize Marathon County's ability to care for our children.

Chairman Burke and Chairman Gard, other distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Finance, good morning. My name is Aaron Koepke and I am the Student Government Association President at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Thank you very much for this opportunity to address you today. I am here today to speak against the Governor's proposed tuition increases for next year.

As students, we realize that we are obligated to do our part in helping the state out of our current budget deficit, as are other state agencies and municipalities. However, students should not be expected to contribute more than their fair share, and with the 10% increase in tuition the Governor is proposing, that is in danger of happening. In all honesty, I feel an increase of this nature is going to price a large majority of UW-System students out of an education here in Wisconsin.

I believe that an increase in tuition of 10% is going to be problematic on a number of levels. First of all, on a personal level, it's going to be problematic for me as a student by making my

college education more expensive. Sure, an extra couple of hundred dollars a year doesn't sound like much, but to most students, including myself, it's quite a hit to the pocket book. And that's not even mentioning what kind of increases out of state students would see. I recognize the fact that I we need to ensure the quality of our education, and that I as a student may be required to pay more for it, but the increase the Governor has proposed is completely unacceptable. 10% is just too much to swallow. Also, I am concerned that a tuition increase will affect my academic progress, a fear that I believe most UW students share. Am I going to graduate on time? Will I have to take a semester or a year off to earn extra money for school? How long will this delay my entrance into a career in my chosen profession? A 10% increase makes me think that all this is a possibility, and an alarming one at that.

Additionally, I see an increase of this magnitude not only hurting UW-System in the long run, but the state's economy as well. Increased tuition restricts access to the UW-System.

Restricted access to the UW-System means fewer UW students. Having fewer students means having fewer graduates, and fewer graduates mean fewer people with college degrees. Fewer people with college degrees mean less people to fill job openings, especially potential high tech/high pay jobs, which we all remember as ranking near the top of the Governor's list of problems that are stifling our state's economy. So my question is this: how can we as a state expect job openings, especially high tech/high pay job openings, to be filled with fewer and fewer qualified UW grads? Furthermore, how can we expect high tech/high pay-type businesses to come to Wisconsin if there's not going to be as many qualified people to fill the positions? Finally, how can we keep UW-System grads in the state if there aren't any enticing career opportunities in high tech/high pay industries for them to snatch up?

In my opinion, I believe we need to link financial aid increases to tuition increases. By doing so, we are going to be able to keep the UW-System affordable and accessible to students and

potential students alike. Linking financial aid increases to tuition increases ensures that an affordable education in Wisconsin is still possible. It's going to get people into school, allow them to get their degree, and potentially help keep them in the state to contribute to our growing economy for many years to come.

With all that in mind, I strongly encourage this committee to consider capping tuition increases at the rate of inflation.

Furthermore, I encourage this committee to link financial aid increases to tuition increases to keep our great university system affordable and accessible for current and potential students.

Increasing tuition at the level the Governor has proposed only serves to restrict people from getting a college degree. I would think that in a time when the state's economy is struggling as it is, we would like as many college graduates out there as we can get, contributing in any way they can to return our fair state to a period of economic stability and prosperity. It's investing in the future, respected committee members. It's an investment that is bound to pay off tenfold of what we put into it. I believe that the fight to ensure a

strong and prosperous Wisconsin economy starts with financial aid today. I believe it starts right here. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.

**Testimony before Joint Finance
February 20, 2002, Marshfield, Wisconsin
Kaitlyn Julius, Legislative Issues Director, UW-Stevens Point**

Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee. My name is Kaitlyn Julius and I am the Student Government Legislative Issues Director at UW-Stevens Point. Today I would like to share my feelings on how the proposed tuition increase might possibly price me out of an education.

The proposed tuition increase will eventually affect and limit the numbers of students attending college. Many students already cannot afford college or else are in great debt due to loans.

As a student from a family of three, a tuition increase could result in a loss of opportunities for my two brothers and me as a graphic designer. I currently pay about \$1,500 extra per semester for art supplies, which is not included in my tuition. This cost is strictly out of pocket so that I'm able to participate in my art classes. As an art major I cannot afford a tuition increase that will limit and take away many opportunities that I once could have had.

I chose to attend school at UW-Stevens Point because of the great opportunities provided at a smaller state school. Through these opportunities that I have received from a state school I will be able to travel abroad next semester without putting my family in tremendous debt. This

tuition increase will not only hinder students like me to grow but also limit the state's growth. I urge you to remember that by increasing tuition you are pricing many students out of an education; or limiting the opportunities and possibilities that many students are able to take advantage of in the state of Wisconsin.

Good morning. I am grateful that I am allowed to speak this morning. I would like to frame my opposition to the proposed tuition raise in economic terms. The law of demand states that the higher the price of a product, the less consumers will demand of that product. The product in this case is a college education, and the consumers are students. This is a broad economic model, but one which personally affects students throughout the University of Wisconsin system.

Obviously there would be a financial impact on myself, my wife, and our three children. I have a family. And unlike most of the younger students, I have marketable skills. I am a trained machinist with six years on the job. But that isn't what I want to do with my life. I want to be a mechanical engineer. I know that I could be making money right now, instead of attending college. But I also know that I will make more money as an engineer. I am determined to get my degree.

Unfortunately, not all students are as determined as I am. The more tuition that must be paid, the more work that must be done to earn the money. With more time devoted to work there is less time for study. The pull of a regular schedule, the relief from the stress of tests and essays, and the ability to start making money now all add up to students dropping out of school before they have reached their goals. The prospect of making 20 – 30 thousand is quite a lure away from college.

A friend of mine, Robert, was struggling to keep up with his studies. He was in his second year of school, working part time to pay for college as well as other bills. He was overburdened, but keeping up. When a personal problem arose, something had to give. It couldn't be the job that was paying the bills. So he dropped out of school. Robert makes ten dollars an hour now, working fulltime. That comes out to almost 21 thousand a year.

But Robert could have been an Electrical Engineer.

Which brings me to my main point. The average starting wage for an Electrical Engineer was 45 thousand dollars in 1999. That is more than twice what he makes now. This may not seem like much. Just once small minor personal tragedy.

The way things are.

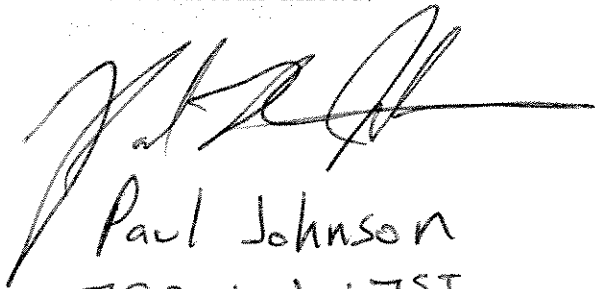
But throughout Wisconsin there are a thousand people just like Robert. Trying to pay for school. Trying to make their lives better. Trying to make society better. Some of them are Engineers and Business majors. Some of them want to teach our schoolchildren. Each of these people could be an asset for the economy of our state. Each of these people could be earning more money, thus paying more taxes. But larger salaries also mean more

expensive cars and larger homes. With every educated Wisconsinite, our state becomes a better place.

What would be the total of all those taxes, fees and purchasing? What would be the value of the businesses founded and expanded, the industry attracted, and the lives improved? No one can say. But I can say this:

If you cut us short, you are only cutting our state short. If you are going to raise tuition drastically, you are going to reduce the demand for an education. And if you balance the budget on the backs of students, you will be collecting money that could have paid the bills of the future.

Please keep in mind that some things that can be cut now will lead to less cost later, but some cuts now will result in a loss of future revenue. Education falls into the second category. Thank you for allowing me to speak today, and I wish you well with the hard decisions ahead.



Paul Johnson
789 W. 17ST
Marshfield, Wis.
54456

(715) 387-0015

Angela Christie
Freshman Executive
UW-Marshfield/Wood County
anmchri8@uwec.edu

The decision to increase tuition is one that lacks direction. Because of the state's budget deficit, students are suffering. Because of poor choices made by past legislatures, we are now the ones who will pay. The increase directly affects current students, future students, and parents. Students who pay for their own schooling are obviously not going to be in agreement with the amplified tuition. If students have to pay more, they are also going to have to work more. This may directly result in lower school involvement and lower grades as well. This should not be something that happens because of budget deficit.

Parents will also be feeling the effects. Parents who are putting their children through college will have to dig deeper in their pocketbooks. To me, this seems to be hindering the already-struggling college student. A 20% increase is a substantial difference. Enough so that students will feel pressured and strained.

UW-Marshfield/Wood County is a school designed for personal attention and affordable education. Lower tuition cost is one thing that swayed me to Marshfield. Raised tuition on 2-year campuses may result in a dwindling enrollment.

It is not fair for students to take a hit like this. We are already working hard at school, at work, and at home. The attempt to balance the books should not be targeted at students.

Everyone is busy. It becomes difficult when money is needed but not available. We as students cannot afford this. Parents cannot afford this. There has to be a different route the Governor can take. What is going to happen when tuition becomes too high for students to enroll? This is not helping anyone. I, and most students can't meet the expense of more tuition. This is not a fair route for our state government to take. I suggest adding a 1% sales tax. This is not something that is going to hurt anyone's bank account, but will allow the state to gain revenue. Raising tuition is not the adequate way for Wisconsin to deal with the deficit.

To: Joint Finance Committee

From: Susan E. Adams
1109 S. Cedar Ave.
Marshfield, WI 54449

Date: Feb 20, 2002

I work in Student Services in Marshfield, and every day I see students burdened with the high cost of child care, rent increases, cars that break down, lay-offs at work, and even divorces. They manage somehow to cope with these financial burdens and pay the high cost of tuition and books, but it takes its toll. Sometimes students must work more hours, and decrease the number of credits they take. This makes the time to graduation significantly longer – and because it takes longer to graduate, they pay a lot more in tuition, because it costs more to attend every year. Tuition has been increasing at twice the cost of inflation for many years now. Yet, the amount of financial aid has stayed the same. The Pell grants have only increased a little every two years or so, and the amount that students can take in Stafford loans has not increased in at least eight years. These factors make going to college extremely costly.

I am also the stepmother of a college student and know first-hand the burden that 7 and 8 % tuition increases already cause us. My husband's and my salaries certainly do not increase at that rate! This tuition increase will really make it more difficult for us, but it may make it impossible for some of our lower-income students to attend.

I urge you to cap tuition increases at the rate of inflation and link financial aid increases to tuition increase to keep the UW System affordable and accessible for the future of the state's economy. After all, the fight for tomorrow's economy starts with financial aid today.

Susan E. Adams

FEBRUARY 20, 2002

**TO: JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE
FROM: ROBERT C UJDA**

My name is Robert Ujda, and I am a student at the UW-Marshfield campus. I am 30 years old, married and have two children, ages 5 and 10 mos. My wife works full time at the Marshfield Clinic, and I am a full time student,

About a year and a half ago, I made a career change. I left my job at the clinic, and returned to school to pursue a career in nursing. I understand there is a severe shortage of nurses currently, and I am up to the challenge. Due to my busy schedule, I find it extremely difficult to work, even part time, and concentrate on school. First and second shifts are occupied with classes, and third shift is when I do my studying. This leaves very little time to spend with my family. Currently, however we have managed to get by.

It has come to my attention, that due to budget cuts, it was proposed to raise my tuition. I find this unacceptable, and unmanageable. I would then need to request financial aid, as I'm sure most students would, as well as other government assistance, and I imagine in the long run, that would cost the state even more.

The current tuition for full time students is just over \$1300.00, and for a full time student is a lot of money. Then you add on cost of books, and all accessories, along with the cost of living, food, and raising two children, and you're well above what even a full time employed student can afford; let alone one who cannot work.

I ask you to seriously consider finding another source of revenue, and leaving the tuition costs where it is, or even lowering it. Our state ranks near the top academically, and it would be a shame to see poor economics as the cause for us to slide.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and perhaps, in the not so distant future, you'll be hearing of me as an advocate and speaker for higher education and excellence.

Sincerely, Robert C. Ujda

Robert Ujda

R.EEGT.

C-EMT-Basic

- a tuition increase will seriously discourage prospective students
- some students will not be able to afford to continue their college education if the tuition increases
- cutting the budget will cause a loss of jobs, which is the worst thing to do if the economy is "bad"

Christina
Hansen

Christina Hansen
(715) 389-1005

To: Joint Finance Committee

From: Hallie Robinson
615 E. 29th St.
Marshfield, WI 54449

Date: February 20, 2002

My name is Hallie Robinson and I am an eighteen year-old freshman at the University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County. Throughout my high school career, I knew I would further my education after graduation, but I knew it would be a pricey learning experience. Setting my sights on UW-Madison and getting my acceptance letter through the mail, I anticipated a world of opportunities. As my family and I began to consider financial aid, scholarships, and student loans, we started to realize the financial strain this would inflict on my family.

Later that month, I received a letter from Dean Carol McCart of UW-Marshfield/Wood County. This letter piqued my interest and even more, grabbed the attention of my parent's checkbook. It was a new option and affordable. I could live locally for a small price and I wouldn't have any outstanding loans. My requirements would be completed and I'd be debt free going into my junior year.

My experience at UW-Marshfield/Wood County has been immeasurable. The life at a small university is the best thing that could have happened to me as well as my family. Year after year more confidence is shown in our UW-College system and our numbers are effectively growing. As a member of my Student Senate I interact with many students who, like myself, were not only impressed with our campus but also with our price.

If our tuition is increased 10-20%, our students will feel the devastating effects of it. Numbers do not mean much when you're on the outside looking in at them. But when you're a struggling college student, or a full-time student **and** parent like many of our non-traditional students are, you have a hard enough time as it is juggling work, school, children, and overall life in general.

Many families, mine included, have felt the strain on our economy of recent, and the price of living is ridiculous. People are being laid off, if not losing their jobs altogether, and I feel that the students of Wisconsin cannot afford to withstand another economic crunch.

In closing, if our tuition rises, I feel it will be detrimental to our future. And since the leaders of our country feel we are the key to the future, I do not see how the **government** can afford to raise our tuition either.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

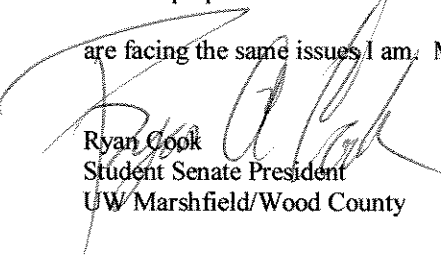


Hallie R. Robinson
Freshman Executive
UW-Marshfield/Wood County Student Senate

Hello my Name is Ryan Cook

I cannot afford to pay a higher tuition. I am working as much as I can right now and I am not making it financially. I Have 10 credits this semester and I involved with my campus as the student rep on many of the committees, I am Student Senate President and I have to work 25-28 hours a week to pay for living expenses, text books and tuition. Between these items it gives me an average week of about 85-90 hour weeks. I do not have ample time to study, but I am doing what I have to.

I will not be attending college next semester, it is not because I do not want to, or academically I cannot do it. I cannot further my education because I cannot afford it. With recent market downfalls, My father, the soul provider of my family has lost his job and my fiancé with whom I split our living expenses, has also lost her job due to the economic hardships of our country, At the end of this semester I will enter the work force unprepared for the future I desire. As much as I like to say my situation is unique, I cannot, Students are facing the same issues I am. My plea to this committee is please remember the students, we are trying.



Ryan Cook
Student Senate President
UW Marshfield/Wood County