



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #496

Medical Student Tuition Assistance (Medical College of Wisconsin)

[LFB 2019-21 Budget Summary: Page 283, #3]

CURRENT LAW

Under current law, the state pays per capita tuition assistance for each Wisconsin resident enrolled as a full-time undergraduate medical student at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) from an appropriation for this purpose with \$1,926,600 GPR in annual funding. In 2018-19, this tuition assistance reduced the annual tuition charge of \$54,050 by \$3,644 for Wisconsin residents, for a net amount of \$50,406. In 2018-19, there were 528 students who qualified for this tuition assistance. Tuition for resident medical school students at the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health was \$34,478 in 2018-19, while for non-resident students it was \$46,387.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$743,500 GPR annually for additional funding for medical student tuition assistance at MCW. This would fund an additional \$1,408 per eligible student in tuition assistance, so the annual award would increase from \$3,644 in 2018-19 to approximately \$5,050 beginning in 2019-20 and annually thereafter.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. In 1967, Marquette University terminated its sponsorship of its medical school due to financial constraints. The medical school, the Medical College of Wisconsin, continued as a private, non-secular medical school. The Legislature determined that Wisconsin needed two medical schools to increase the ratio of physicians to population, which had been below the national average. The Legislature provided financial assistance to MCW to ensure its operation in Wisconsin and to make it more competitive with the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health.

2. From 1989-90 through 2002-03, the tuition assistance payments were set at \$10,091 per

student with an annual appropriation of \$4,105,100 in 2002-03. At that time, net tuition for Wisconsin residents at MCW was roughly comparable to that charged at what was then called the UW-Madison Medical School. In the 2003-05 budget act, funding was reduced by 50% to \$2,052,500, and it was further reduced by across-the-board reductions in the 2009-11 biennium to its current level of \$1,926,600 annually.

3. In 2018-19, tuition for nonresident students at MCW exceeds that at the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health by \$7,663. For resident students, this differential is \$15,928. The additional funding proposed under the bill would reduce this difference by \$1,408. This would provide an additional incentive for Wisconsin residents to attend MCW, and somewhat narrow the difference in resident tuition between these schools.

4. The number of Wisconsin residents attending MCW has increased significantly since 2014-15. There were 381 resident students in 2014-15 (out of 817) and 528 in 2018-19 (out of 981). MCW indicates that this is a result of policy decisions by MCW to establish MCW-Green Bay and MCW-Central Wisconsin to help address physician shortages in the state. While 48% of students at MCW-Milwaukee are Wisconsin residents, the corresponding percentages are 90% at MCW-Green Bay and 76% at MCW-Central Wisconsin.

5. With a fixed amount of funding for state tuition assistance for resident MCW students, the amount of the grant per student has declined from \$5,057 for the 381 students in 2014-15 to \$3,644 per student for the 528 students in 2018-19. MCW submitted a supplemental budget request requesting \$743,500 GPR of annual funding for tuition assistance. This additional funding would allow tuition assistance grant to be provided to resident students at the same level as was done in 2014-15 (approximately \$5,050 per resident student for 528 students). This is the additional funding amount that would be provided under the Governor's budget recommendations.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$743,500 annually for additional funding for medical student tuition assistance at MCW over annual base level funding of \$1,926,600.

ALT 1	Change to	
	Base	Bill
GPR	\$1,487,000	\$0

2. Take no action.

ALT 2	Change to	
	Base	Bill
GPR	\$0	-\$1,487,000

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