1999 DRAFTING REQUEST

Assembly Amendment (AA-AB133)

Received: 06/5/99 Wanted: Soon For: Legislative Fiscal Bureau This file may be shown to any legislator: NO May Contact: Subject: State Finance - miscellaneous					Received By: champra			
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					By/Representing: Loppnow			
					Drafter: champra Alt. Drafters: Extra Copies: JTK			
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/1	champra 06/5/99	jgeller 06/5/99	martykr 06/6/99		lrb_docadmin 06/7/99			
/2	champra 06/8/99	jgeller 06/8/99	ismith 06/8/99		lrb_docadmin 06/8/99			
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Received: 06/5/99 Received By: champra

Wanted: **Soon** Identical to LRB:

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May Contact: Alt. Drafters:

Subject: State Finance - miscellaneous Extra Copies: JTK

Pre Topic:

LFB:.....Loppnow -

Topic:

Federal interest reimbursements

Instructions:

See Attached.

Drafting History:

Vers. <u>Drafted</u> <u>Reviewed</u> <u>Typed</u> <u>Proofed</u> <u>Submitted</u> <u>Jacketed</u> <u>Required</u>

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1999 DRAFTING REQUEST

Assembly Amendment (AA-AB133)

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FE Sent For:

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Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

June 3, 1999

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #650

Federal Interest Reimbursements (Cashflow)

CURRENT LAW

Federal rules require the state to minimize the time between state payment of federal grant expenditures and the time the state receives, or draws down, federal reimbursements. Under federal law, the state has agreed to draw-down patterns for 28 of the largest federal grant programs, so that neither party will earn interest at the expense of the other. If the state receives early reimbursement, it must return excess interest earnings to the federal government. In recent years, however, the usual situation has been for the state to receive reimbursements after the agreed-on date, and for the state to receive net payments from the federal government.

The Department of Administration (DOA) makes calculations annually of the timing of state expenditures and federal reimbursements. Based on these numbers, the state has received interest reimbursement from the federal government for four of the last five years. DOA has deposited these monies into a federal program revenue appropriation for federal grants and contracts awarded to DOA.

GOVERNOR

No provision.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB), in a letter to the Co-chairpersons of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee dated May 19, 1999, questions whether the current accounting treatment of payments received from the federal government is appropriate, given the nature of the federal appropriation that DOA is using for this purpose. DOA has used this appropriation, so that monies would remain available to pay interest to the federal government, if necessary.

2. The LAB indicates that after consideration of \$250,000 that was transferred in 1995-96 to partially fund financial services provided by the State Controller's Office, there remains a balance of approximately \$1.31 million of these monies in this federal appropriation. The LAB indicates that the Legislature could direct that these monies lapse to the general fund and specify that any future federal reimbursements be deposited in the general fund. In order to establish a means of payment if the state must pay the federal government, a GPR sum sufficient appropriation for this purpose could be created, with the requirement that DOA seek Finance Committee approval under a 14-day passive review process before making any payments. Based on projected reimbursements, it is estimated that \$150,000 annually would be deposited in the general fund under this alternative, in addition to the initial \$1.31 million balance in the appropriation.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

1. Direct that the balance of a DOA federal appropriation attributable to federal interest reimbursements lapse to the general fund, which would result in a lapse of an estimated \$1.31 million in 1999-00. Specify that any future federal reimbursements be deposited in the general fund, which would be an estimated \$150,000 in GPR-Earned annually. Create a GPR sum sufficient appropriation under miscellaneous appropriations for interest repayments to the federal government, with the requirement that DOA seek Finance Committee approval under a 14-day passive review process before making any payments.

Alternative 1	<u>GPR</u>
1999-01 REVENUE (Change to Base)	\$1,610,000
[Change to Bill	<i>\$1,610,000</i>]

2. Maintain current law.

Prepared by: Dave Loppnow



State of Wisconsin

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT BUREAU

JANICE MUELLED STATE AUDITON SUITE 402 131 WEST WILSON STREET MADISON WISCOMSIN 53/03 (6)8) 265-29 EAX (6)8) 287-9-10

May 19, 1999

Senator Gary R. George and Representative Carol Kelso, Co-chairpersons Joint Legislative Audit Committee State Capitol Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator George and Representative Kelso:

During the course of our annual audit of the State of Wisconsin's financial statements, we identified four fiscal control and budgetary issues for your attention. The first concerns a statutory requirement to hold funds in reserve for six years to cover cancelled state checks that have not been cashed. If the Legislature were to amend this requirement, the State could both maintain a prudent level of reserves for canceled checks and, on a one-time basis, lapse \$3.6 million from the canceled drafts reserve to the General Fund for appropriation.

The second issue concerns accounting for more than \$1.5 million in federal reimbursements for lost interest earnings related to the administration of federal grants. We had expected these funds to be accounted for as general purpose revenue in the General Fund. However, the Department of Administration accounted for them in a federal program revenue appropriation. The Legislature could direct the Department of Administration to lapse this \$1.5 million, as well as all future federal interest reimbursements, to the General Fund for general appropriation.

The third issue relates to a \$500,000 trust fund established by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) under a court-ordered plea agreement with Menard, Inc., which DNR has not reported to the Joint Committee on Finance or included in its fiscal year 1999-2001 budget request. Under the plea agreement, DNR is to use the trust fund to support "clean sweep" grants that allow municipalities to establish, operate, or maintain household hazardous waste disposal programs; the State may not use the trust fund to reduce its current funding levels for clean programs; and any money remaining in the trust fund after five years is to be transferred to the Common School Fund, which supports low-interest loans both to schools and to other governments. During budget deliberations, the Legislature could authorize DNR to use the trust fund to expand the clean sweep program. Alternatively, the Legislature could direct DNR not to spend trust fund assets, but instead to allow the trust fund to accumulate interest until the end of calendar year 2002, when the balance may be transferred to the Common School Fund.

Our final issue relates to accounting for the State's building program. We note that \$446,000 has accumulated in the Bond Security and Redemption Fund, apparently as a result of errors in accounting for debt service payments. The Legislature may wish to consider directing the

Senator Gary R. George and Representative Carol Kelso, Co-chairpersons Page 2 May 19, 1999

Department of Administration to transfer these funds to the General Fund and other funds that originally made the debt service payments.

We also followed up on the status of \$1.9 million in undistributed interest earnings in the Capital Improvement Fund, which we described to the Audit Committee in January 1998. The Building Commission selected one of the options we proposed and, in February 1999, transferred the funds—which then exceeded \$2.1 million—to the State Building Trust Fund.

We hope that you find this information useful. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me.

Sincerely.

fanice Mueller State Auditor

JM/BN/jb

Senator Judith Robson
Senator Brian Burke
Senator Peggy Rosenzweig
Senator Mary Lazich

Mark D. Bugher, Secretary Department of Administration

George E. Meyer, Secretary Department of Natural Resources

Jack C. Voight, State Treasurer Office of the State Treasurer

Representative Stephen Nass Representative John Gard Representative Robert Ziegelbauer Representative David Cullen

FISCAL CONTROL AND BUDGETARY ISSUES

During the course of our annual audit of the State's financial statements, we perform work at the Department of Administration, the Office of the State Treasurer, and many other state agencies. Management letters to agencies include our recommendations for improved accounting and unit mal control. In this letter, we address fiscal matters that merit legislative attention.

Canceled Drafts Reserve

Each year, some checks the State writes to employes, aid recipients, vendors, contractors, and others are not presented for payment. The State is liable for these checks for six years. Statutes require the State to cancel any checks that have not been cashed after the first year and to transfer a corresponding amount to canceled draft reserve accounts. For the next five years, cancelled checks may be reissued and paid from these reserve accounts if the original checks are presented or if payees can prove they are entitled to payment. After a total of six years, funds for checks that remain uncashed are lapsed from the canceled drafts reserves to the General Fund or the segregated funds that were originally charged for these checks.

Ideally, the State should maintain reserves that are sufficient to pay all reissued checks without unnecessarily restricting funds that could otherwise be available for appropriation. However, a review of balances in the canceled drafts reserve accounts suggests that current statutory accounting requirements for canceled checks may be unduly conservative. The Legislature could amend the statutory accounting requirements to provide a prudent balance in the canceled drafts reserves and, at the same time, make approximately \$3.6 million—on a one-time basis—available to be appropriated for other purposes.

Article VIII, Section 2 of the Wisconsin Constitution obligates the State to pay checks and other claims presented for payment within six years of their date of issue. The Department of Administration (DOA), the Office of the State Treasurer, and the various state agencies share responsibility for accounting for state checks that may be lost, stolen, forgotten, or uncashed for other reasons. DOA and the treasury cancel those checks not presented for payment within one year and, in accordance with s. 20.912(2), Wis. Stats., credit reserves for canceled drafts to the General Fund and each of the State's segregated funds. As of June 30, 1998, the General Fund reserve for canceled drafts totaled \$7.3 million; other funds' reserves were substantially less than that amount.

Statutes are written to ensure that sufficient funds are set aside to pay potential claims against all outstanding canceled drafts. However, only about 60 percent of drafts that have been canceled are later presented for payment, and the vast majority of these are presented within two years of cancellation. Table I shows a five-year history of the canceled drafts reserve account for the General Fund. As shown in Table I, newly canceled drafts typically offset the amounts of reissued checks.

Table 1

General Fund Canceled Drafts Reserve Account

	FY 1993-94	FY 1994-95	FY 1995-96	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98
Balance: Beginning of the Year Add: Canceled Checks Less: Checks Reissued	\$5,431,692 2,299,501 1,120,098 6,611,095	\$5,839,738 2,674,583 1,186,525 7,327,796	\$6,417,745 2.178,210 1.023,207 7,572,748	\$5.399.041 2,548,078 711,333 7,235,786	\$6,268,574 2,969,103 1,526,949 7,710,728
Lapse	771,357	910,051	2.173,707	967,212	383,900*
Bolance at End of the Year	\$5,839,738	\$6,417,745	\$5,399,041	\$6,268,574	\$7,326,828

^{*} Lapse adjusted to correct for prior years' errors.

The State earns interest on balances in the cancelled draft reserves. However, because current statutes require cancelled draft reserve funds be set aside for the entire six-year period, even though there is little likelihood all reserve funds will be needed to pay reissued checks, these funds are not available for appropriation until the entire six-year period has elapsed.

Cramtes could be amended to reduce the level of the canceled check reserves in the continuing to fulfill the State's constitutional obligation to pay any checks presented within six years. Two options could be considered.

First, the Legislature could eliminate the reserve requirement completely, and instead authorize sum-sufficient appropriations to pay for the reissnance of previously canceled drafts. Since sum-sufficient appropriations provide budget authority to expend any amount necessary to fulfill their purpose, this option would allow DOA and the treasury to reissue any previously canceled drafts that are presented for payment within six years of issuance. This option would also provide for the largest one-time lapse to the General Fund and segregated funds. However, complete elimination of the reserves may not be prudent because sufficient funds may not be readily available if a higher-than-expected number of canceled drafts is presented for payment.

A preferred option may be to reduce—rather than eliminate—the reserve requirement. For example, the Legislature could amend s. 20.912(2), Wis: Stats., to require that the balance in the reserve for canceled drafts at the end of each fiscal year equal a specified percentage, such as

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50 percent, of the value of outstanding canceled drafts. Had this requirement been in place at the end of fiscal year (FY) 1997-98, \$3.6 million would have lapsed from the reserve for canceled drafts to the General Fund and would have been available, on a one-time basis, for appropriation. Smaller amounts would have lapsed to the State's segregated funds. For example, on a one-time basis, \$450,000 would have lapsed to the Transportation Fund, \$95,000 to the Patients Compensation Fund, and \$83,000 to the Fixed Retirement Trust Fund.

If the preferred option is implemented, the Legislature will need to create sum-sufficient appropriations for use in the event the amount of canceled drafts actually presented for payment exceeds the funds available in the reserves.

Federal Interest Reimbursements

to federal grant program expenditures paid by the State. DOA is responsible for requesting federal reimbursement on behalf of most state agencies, and federal rules provide that the State may be paid interest if reimbursements are received after grant related checks clear the State's bank. We are concerned because DOA accounted for more than \$1.5 million in federal interest reimbursements using a federal program revenue appropriation rather than the General Fund. As a result, these funds are not available for general appropriation by the Legislature.

Federal rules require the State to minimize the period between the time it incurs federal grant expenditures and the time it receives, or draws down, federal reimbursements. The federal Cash Management Improvement Act requires the State and the federal government to agree on draw-down patterns for 28 of the larges deral grant programs that ensure neither party will earn interest at the expense of the other. If the State receives federal reimbursement before the agreed-upon date, the State earns excess interest that it is required to return to the federal government. It is more common, however, for the State to receive federal reimbursement after the agreed-upon date and thus lose potential interest earnings.

Statutes do not specifically address how DOA is to account for federal interest reimbursements. Therefore, s. 20.906. Wis. Stats., requires these funds to be accounted for as general purpose revenue of the General Fund and made available for general appropriation by the Legislature. However, DOA has instead used the federal program revenue appropriation authorized under s. 20.505(1)(ma), Wis. Stats., to account for federal interest reimbursements.

DOA makes annual calculations of the effect that differences between the agreed-upon pattern and the actual reimbursement date have on interest earnings. Based on these calculations, DOA received interest reimbursement from the federal government for four of the past five years. As shown in Table 2, the General Fund received more than \$1.5 million in federal interest reimbursements from FY 1994-95 through FY 1998-99.

Table 2

General Fund Federal Interest Reimbursements

- Garage	
	Interest Peindursements
Eiscal Year	Recei ved
1994-95	\$ 380,350
1995-96	319,855
1996-97	(6,474)
1997-98*	259,710
1998-99	605,076
Total	\$1,558,517
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* Includes \$5,260 received from the Wisconsin Transportation Fund.

We believe DOA's accounting treatment is inappropriate because the federal program revenue appropriation it uses was authorized for specific federal grants and contracts awarded to DOA and did not provide for the crediting of interest reimbursements. DOA argues that interest credits should remain in the federal accounts in case the State must pay interest to the federal government.

We also note that in FY 1995-96, without requesting permission from the Joint Committee on Finance, DOA transferred \$250,000 in interest reimbursements to the appropriation authorized in s. 20.505(1)(kj). Wis. Stats., to partially fund financial services provided by the State Controller's Office. However, we believe this is an unauthorized use of the interest reimbursements and that DOA should have recovered the full costs of operations through user charges to state agencies.

If it wished to do so, the Legislature could direct that the remaining \$1,308,517 in federal interest credits, as well as any future credits, be lapsed to the General Fund for general appropriation. In addition, the Legislature could create a sum-sufficient appropriation for use in the event the State is required to pay the federal government interest credits, and it could direct DOA to request authority from the Joint Committee on Finance before making such payment.

4.

Clean Sweep Grants

State agencies are authorized to administer various programs through the state budget process, under which the Legislature appropriates program funding. Occasionally, state agencies also receive gifts, grants, and other unexpected funding. To ensure that these funds are taken into account when the State's budget is developed, s. 20.907, Wis. Stats., requires the Joint Committee on Finance to approve their receipt and requires state agencies to report to both the Joint Legislative Committee on Finance and DOA on their expenditure. We are concerned that over the next four years, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may use funds it received through a legal settlement—but has not reported to the Joint Committee on Finance or included in its current budget request—to significantly expand the "clean sweep" grants it makes available to local governments through the Household Hazardous Wastes Grant Program.

Since the 1991-93 biennium, the Legislature has appropriated \$150,000 annually from the Environmental Fund to DNR for the Household Hazardous Wastes Grant Program. This appropriation, which is currently authorized under s. 20.370(6)(bs), Wis. Stats., is intended to assist municipalities in funding programs for the collection and disposal of household hazardous waste materials. DNR awards each qualifying municipality a clean sweep grant of up to \$15,000 annually under a competitive application process.

In December 1997, the State entered into a plea agreement with Menard, Inc., to resolve a charge of unlicensed transportation of hazardous waste. As part of this agreement, Menard, Inc., was required to pay \$500,000 to a trust fund that DNR was to establish for funding the same clean sweep grants for which the Legislature appropriates funding. The plea agreement stipulates that trust fund money may be used only if the State maintains its current funding for these programs. Any money remaining in the trust fund as of December 2002 is to be paid to the Common School Fund, which supports low-interest loans to schools and to other governments.

In the January 1998, DNR received a check for \$500,000 from Menard, Inc., which could not be commingled with other state funds under the terms of the plea agreement. However, DNR failed to establish the required trust fund until eight months later, in August 1998. Depositing the check at that time resulted in a loss of at least \$12,500 in potential interest earnings (assuming a 5 percent return) during 1998.

More significantly, DNR has not directly informed the Joint Committee on Finance of its receipt of the \$500,000, nor has it sought legislative approval to spend the money on clean sweep programs or disclosed these funds in its biennial budget request. In the proposed FY 1999-2001 budget that the Legislature is now considering, DNR again requests \$150,000 annually for clean sweep grants.

DNR has already awarded the majority of its \$150,000 appropriation for FY 1998 69, as well as an additional \$30,000 of trust fund assets. However, as shown in Table 3, DNR allowed funds appropriated for clean sweep grants to lapse to the Environmental Fund from FY 1994-95 through FY 1997-98.

Table 3

Department of Natural Resources
Household Hazardous Wastes Grant Program
Lapsed Spending Authority

Fiscal Year	Amount Lapsed	
1997-98	\$22,163	
1996-97	14,999	
1995-96	6,682	
1994-95	10,409	

Because DNR had not expended its full appropriation for clean sweep grants in recent years, it would appear that \$150,000 annually may be sufficient to fulfill program objects. The trust fund but rather to allow them to accumulate interest until the end of calendar year 200? when they may be transferred to the Common School Fund.

Alternatively, the Legislature could either altern DNR to spend all available trust fund assets but direct it to seek approval for the trust fund from the Joint Committee on Finance and to report expenditures annually, or it could direct DNR to seek specific legislative approval, through the budget process, before expending all or any portion of the \$500,000 available in the trust fund.

Accounting for the State's Building Program

Statutes require the Legislative Audit Bureau to calculate and certify the State's net indebtedness and to audit the Bond Security and Redemption Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund as of January 1 of each year. We also audit the State Building Trust Fund, which accounts for a portion of the State's building program. During our current audit of the State's building program, we identified a balance of \$446,084 in the Bond Security and Redemption Fund that has accumulated because of errors in billing state agencies for debt service payment.

The State issues general obligation bonds to fund state agency building projects, home loans administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and pollution abatement and other grant programs administered by DNR. To pay the debt service costs, including interest, on these general obligation bonds, the Legislature authorizes various sum-sufficient appropriations that are funded by general purpose revenue, program revenue, and segregated fund revenue. The State Controller's Office within DOA is responsible for maintaining accounts for each bond issue.



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State of Misconsin 1999 - 2000 LEGISLATURE



RAC:...

LFB:.....Loppnow - Federal interest reimbursements

FOR 1999-01 BUDGET - NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

LFB AMENDMENT

TO 1999 ASSEMBLY BILL 133 AND 1999 SENATE BILL 45

At the locations indicated, amend the bill as follows:

1. Page 145, line 9: after that line insert:

"Section 79. 16.54 (13) of the statutes is created to read:

16.54 (13) (a) If the state receives any interest payments from the federal government relating to the timing of expenditures by the state pursuant to a federal government grant program or federal government contract, the payments shall be credited to the general fund as general purpose revenue — earned.

(b) If the state is required to pay any interest payments to the federal government relating to the timing of expenditures by the state pursuant to a federal government grant program or federal government contract, the secretary shall notify the cochairpersons of the joint committee on finance, in writing, that the state is required to pay an interest payment. The notice shall contain an accounting of the

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amount of interest that the state is required to pay. If the cochairpersons of the committee do not notify the secretary that the committee has scheduled a meeting for the purpose of reviewing the proposed payment of interest within 14 working days after the date of the secretary's notification, the payment may be made as proposed by the secretary. If, within 14 working days after the date of the secretary's notification, the cochairpersons of the committee notify the secretary that the committee has scheduled a meeting for the purpose of reviewing the proposed interest payment, no interest payment may be made without the approval of the committee."

2. Page 471, line 10: after that line insert:

"Section 613m. 20.855 (1) (dm) of the statutes is created to read:

20.855 (1) (dm) Interest reimbursements to federal government. A sum sufficient to pay any interest reimbursement to the federal government relating to the timing of expenditures by the state pursuant to a federal government grant program or federal government contract.".

3. Page 1398, line 24: after that line insert:

17 nonstat "(19) Calculation of Federal interest reimbursements. No later than the first day of the 2nd month beginning after the effective date of this subsection, the secretary of administration shall calculate the the amount of moneys received by the state as interest reimbursements from the federal government less the amounts paid by the state to the federal government as interest reimbursements before the effective date of this subsection.".

4. Page 1439, line 10: after that line insert:

FEDERAL INTEREST REIMBURSEMENT LAPSE. Notwithstanding section 20.001 1 (3) (a) of the statutes, no later than the first day of the 2nd month beginning after $\mathbf{2}$ the effective date of this subsection, there is lapsed to the general fund from the 3 appropriation account under section 20.505 (1) (ma) of the statutes the amount determined by the secretary of administration under Section 9101 (19 of this ac (END)



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State of Misconsin 1999 - 2000 LEGISLATURE

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LFB:.....Loppnow - Federal interest reimbursements

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7	credited to the general fund as general purpose revenue — earned.
8	(b) If the state is required to pay any interest payments to the federal
9	government relating to the timing of expenditures by the state pursuant to a federal
10	government grant program or federal government contract, the secretary shall notify
11	the cochairpersons of the joint committee on finance, in writing, that the state is

required to pay an interest payment. The notice shall contain an accounting of the

amount of interest that the state is required to pay. If the cochairpersons of the committee do not notify the secretary that the committee has scheduled a meeting for the purpose of reviewing the proposed payment of interest within 14 working days after the date of the secretary's notification, the payment may be made as proposed by the secretary. If, within 14 working days after the date of the secretary's notification, the cochairpersons of the committee notify the secretary that the committee has scheduled a meeting for the purpose of reviewing the proposed interest payment, no interest payment may be made without the approval of the committee.".

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3. Page 1398, line 24: after that line insert:

"(19f) CALCULATION OF FEDERAL INTEREST REIMBURSEMENTS. No later than the first day of the 2nd month beginning after the effective date of this subsection, the secretary of administration shall calculate the the amount of moneys received by the state as interest reimbursements from the federal government less the amounts paid by the state to the federal government as interest reimbursements before the effective date of this subsection."

4. Page 1439, line 10: after that line insert:

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"(2f) Federal interest reimbursement lapse. Notwithstanding section 20.001 (3) (a) of the statutes, no later than the first day of the 2nd month beginning after the effective date of this subsection, there is lapsed to the general fund from the appropriation account under section 20.505 (1) (ma) of the statutes the amount determined by the secretary of administration under Section 9101 (19f) of this act.".

(END)

D- Note

P This dupt deletes an extra "the" on page 2, live 19. Otherwise, everything remains the same as LKB b 0528/1.

RAC

DRAFTER'S NOTE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

LRBb0528/2dn RAC:jlg:ijs

June 8, 1999

This draft deletes an extra "the" on page 2, line 19. Otherwise, everything remains the same as LRBb0528/1.

Richard A. Champagne Legislative Attorney Phone: (608) 266–9930

E-mail: Rick.Champagne@legis.state.wi.us



State of Misconsin 1999 - 2000 LEGISLATURE

LRBb0528/2 RAC:jlg:ijs

LFB:.....Loppnow - Federal interest reimbursements

FOR 1999-01 BUDGET — NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

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8	(b) If the state is required to pay any interest payments to the federal
9	government relating to the timing of expenditures by the state pursuant to a federal
10	government grant program or federal government contract, the secretary shall notify
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appropriation account under section 20.505 (1) (ma) of the statutes the amount
determined by the secretary of administration under Section 9101 (19f) of this act.".
(END)