



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Date: October 28, 2015

To: Assembly Committee on Transportation

From: State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

RE: Assembly Bill 356 UW Parking Fees

Dear Chair Ripp and Committee Members:

Thank you for your consideration of Assembly Bill 356 which seeks to allow campuses within the University of Wisconsin System to use revenue generated by parking fees for transportation and transportation related programs.

Currently, state law restricts the use of parking fees and fines to developing and operating parking ramps or other transportation facilities. In a 2014 review of the UW System's transportation parking fees and fines revenues, the Legislative Audit Bureau found that the use of parking fees and fines were being used contrary to statutory authority. The Audit Bureau's primary finding was the use of parking fees for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Transportation Services Commuter Solutions Program, including student and employee bus passes and the Safe Walk program which provides late night walks to over 1,800 students a year. The Legislative Audit Bureau recommended the UW System seek statutory changes that would allow parking revenues to be used for these programs.

Campuses such as UW-Madison host over 75,000 students, employees, and visitors daily. With only 13,000 available parking spots, it is important for the University to be creative and limit the amount of single occupancy vehicles on campus. Programs like Commuter Solutions improve the availability of motor vehicle parking by offering student and employee bus service and over 13,000 bicycle parking spaces. Reducing demand by providing other transportation options also keeps parking fees affordable.

It is estimated that the Commuter Solutions Program has eliminated the need for an additional 4,600 parking spaces costing roughly \$138 million. If UW-Madison would be required to add these additional parking spaces, parking permit prices would need to increase by \$125 per year per vehicle to fund the infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate these vehicles.

I urge your support for this legislation to provide UW institutions with the flexibility to offer innovative programs to address their transportation needs. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.



DAVE MURPHY

State Representative • 56th Assembly District

TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation
RE: Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 356
DATE: October 28, 2015

Chairman Ripp and members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation, thank you for hearing my testimony in support of Assembly Bill 356.

This bipartisan bill gives each UW institution more flexibility to manage the revenue generated by parking fees to cover the costs of developing and operating transportation facilities, and campus safety or transportation-related programs.

This request came to my office from the UW in response to an audit from the Legislative Audit Bureau that recommended the statute be clarified to make it clear that parking revenue can be used to fund transportation-related and campus safety programs. This bill clarifies the language and makes it less restrictive. The legislature shouldn't micromanage each institution, and in this case, I don't see why the legislature should be telling the university how they can use their parking revenue. We should trust the leaders of each institution to know best how those funds need to be allocated and what programs best meet their transportation and safety needs.

The bill also contains a provision that prohibits the UW from requesting general fund supported borrowing for the construction of parking facilities. Currently, the UW uses parking revenues to construct parking facilities and this provision codifies that practice into law.

Lastly, each UW institution provides different programs to meet their unique transportation and safety needs. Many of these programs are dependent on student segregated fees. By diversifying the types of funds that can be used to operate these programs, campuses will be less dependent on student segregated fees. The flexibility to implement transportation programs to better meet the transportation needs of students and employees reduces demand to build costly new parking facilities, thereby keeping parking fees lower, too.

I hope that you support removing this barrier to the UW's ability to responsibly and effectively manage their budget. Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill.



Bill Position
Board of Regents - University of Wisconsin System
2015-16 Legislative Session

SB 276-AB 356

University of Wisconsin System parking and transportation facilities and parking fees

LEGISLATION

Authors: Senator Sheila Harsdorf and Representative David Murphy

This bill allows University of Wisconsin (UW) parking fees and fines to be used for campus safety and transportation-related programs. Current law authorizes the Board of Regents of the UW System and UW chancellors to regulate motor vehicle parking on property under their jurisdiction.

Current law requires that any parking fines or fees collected by a UW institution pursuant to such regulations must be used only to enforce the regulations or develop and operate parking or other transportation facilities at the institution.

This bill also allows the parking fines or fees to be used for any campus safety or transportation-related program developed or operated at the institution at which the fines or fees are collected.

The bill also prohibits the building commission from authorizing any general fund supported borrowing to aid in the construction of parking facilities at any UW institution.

UW SYSTEM POSITION:

SUPPORT

As part of a 2013 audit, the Legislative Audit Bureau discovered a possible discrepancy between how UW System institutions utilized parking revenues and state statutes. The audit bureau recommended that UW System seek statutory changes to address that situation.

Currently, state statute restricts the use of parking fees and fines to developing and operating parking or other transportation facilities. UW-Madison considers the wording of the current statute to be vague in that "facilities" did not necessarily mean tangible assets, but rather could be any program that helps meet campus access needs.

This bill will clarify that University of Wisconsin institutions are authorized to use revenue from parking permits and fines to fund campus safety or other transportation-related programs.

The Office of University Recommends that the Board of Regents formally takes a position in support of this legislation.