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Joint Committee on Finance

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Freshwater Collaborative Positions (UW System)

[LFB 2023-25 Budget Summary: Page 668, #16]

CURRENT LAW

The Freshwater Collaborative is a partnership between the 13 UW System public universities, connecting students and faculty with industry partners, local communities, policymakers, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups. The Collaborative's mission is to: (1) contribute to Wisconsin's reputation as a world leader in freshwater science, technology, entrepreneurship, and economic growth; (2) provide support to meet the need for a knowledgeable and skilled water workforce through explicit structuring of curriculum, training, and workplace experience; and (3) establish a global water resource to identify and manage problems through collaborative research across the natural science, engineering, social science, economics, and policy arenas. A primary focus of the Collaborative is fostering collaborative research and initiatives across the 13 campuses, private sector, and state institutions. Examples of the Collaborative's activities include providing scholarships and student support, developing new watercentric training programs for undergraduates, and recruiting new faculty and staff.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 would provide 22.50 GPR positions beginning in fiscal year 2023-24 to support the work of the Freshwater Collaborative.

2. Under section 16.505(2p)(a) of the statutes, the Board of Regents or the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison may create or abolish a full-time equivalent academic staff or faculty position or portion thereof from revenues appropriated under section 20.285(1)(a), the main general program operation appropriation for UW System. The statutes require the Board of Regents or Chancellor and Department of Administration (DOA) to enter into a memorandum of understanding that establishes a methodology for identifying and accounting for the cost of funding any positions that are created, and UW System is required to annually submit a report to

JFC and DOA regarding the number of FTE positions created or abolished by the Board or the Chancellor during the preceding fiscal year. The Secretary of DOA and the President of the UW System signed such a MOU on November 29 and 30, 2001.

3. On October 2, 2022, UW System submitted their annual position report which noted that total GPR positions increased by 25 positions in appropriation 20.285(1)(ar) for the Freshwater Collaborative.

CONCLUSION

Given UW's statutory authority to create or abolish full-time equivalent academic staff or faculty positions, and the fact that the UW System has already created these positions, no legislative action is required.

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