



May 22, 2009

Dr. Kevin Reilly
President
University of Wisconsin System
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear President Reilly:

We know that the recent economic news has further complicated the already difficult challenges the University of Wisconsin System faces. And, while we are sensitive to Wisconsin's need to achieve a reasonable balance between providing services to those who need them and not overburdening the taxpayers who bear so much of the cost of those services, we believe that it is important to underscore and to support those UW System initiatives that will facilitate its ability to manage efficiently and effectively in these challenging times.

To that end, the Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Higher Education Business Roundtable today passed the following resolution.

“Whereas:

- The Wisconsin Higher Education Business Roundtable (WHEBR) believes that in order to compete in today's global economy, Wisconsin needs a robust public university system.
- WHEBR is dedicated to the promotion of a world-class public university system capable of providing Wisconsin's students, citizens, governments and businesses with the educational, research and developmental resources they need to secure Wisconsin's economic vitality and sustain its unique quality of life.
- WHEBR has invested considerable time and effort in examining our state's educational needs, emerging economic challenges, the current efforts of our University of Wisconsin System (UW) institutions, and what must be done to secure Wisconsin's place as an economic leader in the future.
- Current budget decisions and recommendations under consideration will result in the UW absorbing cuts of somewhere between \$120 million and \$211 million (9.2% of the UW's General Purpose Revenue funding).
- The UW must be allowed and encouraged to continue to achieve new savings and enhance productivity in order to adjust to the tight budgets mandated in these challenging times.

Now therefore, we resolve that:

- WHEBR encourages Gov. Doyle and the members of the Wisconsin Legislature to support the UW's proposals for streamlining the UW's capital budget management options. Specifically:

- Raising the threshold at which lawmakers must approve new construction projects in the state budget from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million. Lawmakers would not have to approve projects funded by private donations and grants.
 - Changing the way projects are budgeted so that lawmakers would give agencies a specific amount of money for building projects. The agencies could then transfer savings among projects as long as they stayed under the spending cap.
 - Allowing the UW to hire general contractors to lead projects and hire subcontractors.
- WHEBR encourages Gov. Doyle and the members of the Wisconsin Legislature to support the UW's efforts to keep access to advanced education available to all our citizens by increasing the availability of need-based financial aid for low- and middle-income families.
 - WHEBR encourages Gov. Doyle and the members of the Wisconsin Legislature to maintain a level of funding for the UW System consistent with Wisconsin's need to stimulate economic development via enrollment, scientific and technical research, and competitive academic excellence."

As you know, the Wisconsin Higher Education Business Roundtable's Board of Directors includes voting members from the business community and non-voting members from the broader academic community. The Roundtable also includes more than 100 Mentor members from the business community around the state. The resolution was passed by the voting members of the Board and will now be shared with all of our Mentor members and others encouraging them to share their thoughts on these important issues. The resolution will also be posted at our Web site: www.wiroundtable.org

Voting in favor of the resolution:

Mr. Steve Brown
Owner, Steve Brown Apartments

Mr. Randy Dimond
Vice President and Chief Technical Officer, Promega

Mr. Michael Jones
Vice President-Corporate Affairs, MillerCoors

Mr. Louis Maier
President and CEO, Emjay Corp., Retired

Mr. Mark O'Connell
Executive Director, Wisconsin Counties Association

Mr. Michael Youngman
Vice President-Government Relations, Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company

Voting against the resolution: There were no votes against the resolution.

We were unable to reach Board Member, Mr. James Troupis, Partner, Michael Best & Friedrich LLP