

University of Wisconsin – Green Bay

Student Government Association

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Resolution in support of Wisconsin Legislators further evaluating the Governor's proposed \$25 million financial aid increase as funded by UW-System schools' auxiliary funds

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ABSTRACT: The Students of the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay and the greater University of Wisconsin System acknowledge the difficult situation the state faces, but feel that the proposed sweep of \$25 million from primarily student funded auxiliary accounts is an inappropriate use of the money. We believe this for the following reasons:

- * Most of this money was earmarked for specific construction and maintenance projects
- * Because the money was earmarked, fees associated with auxiliary accounts will undoubtedly increase for many students
- * This proposal, in effect, punishes schools for prudent and wise budgeting practices
- * The money was collected from students and students should have the right to approve any transfer of such funds

Therefore, we call upon the legislature of the State of Wisconsin to seriously consider whether or not the Governor's proposal is truly beneficial to the students of the state. Increased financial aid is a concept we wholeheartedly endorse, but financial aid should never come at the direct expense of other students. We also call upon other governance groups to consider the issues and determine in their own right if they believe this is the best course of action.

WHEREAS: State support of higher education as a proportion of the total UW System budget has been waning for years. For example, between 2000 and 2008 the proportion of state funding for UW-Green Bay has dropped from 37.8% of the total operating budget to only 34.3%.

WHEREAS: This decrease in support has, over the years, created a financial strain that has been progressively passed on to students, as demonstrated by a 46% increase in cost of tuition and room and board from 2003 to 2008.

WHEREAS: Within Governor Jim Doyle's 2009-11 biennial budget proposal, the University of Wisconsin System may be asked to absorb \$174 million in cuts statewide,

WHEREAS: As part of the \$174 million, auxiliary funds from every UW-System school are to be seized and put towards a one-time, System-wide, \$25 million contribution to an increase in financial aid, with the explicit intent of holding harmless to any tuition increases those students whose families make less than a combined \$60,000 per year,

WHEREAS: In the 2003-05 biennium, \$26.5 million of auxiliary balances were seized for a similar increase in financial aid,

WHEREAS: Auxiliary fund reserves are often kept for a specific purpose and those fees used to collect these balances are commonly raised in consultation with students.

WHEREAS: If the proposed auxiliary sweep is completed, students across the system will be forced to compensate for those losses through substantially increased fees in areas such as; dining services, parking, and room and board,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The students of UW-Green Bay and students across the UW- System recognize the current economic environment, and are willing to bear our share of the financial burden this biennium. While we realize that the \$100 million GPR reduction and the additional \$49 million 1% baseline reduction is a necessary burden that we must accept, we feel that the proposed \$25 million financial aid plan would be extremely detrimental to the future quality of the education and community that the UW-System strives to attain,

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: Whether it is UW-Superior's \$5,250 or UW-La Crosse's \$5.4 million proposed auxiliary contributions, we do not believe that these funds should be used for purposes other than what they were intended for, because in nearly every circumstance these funds are earmarked for projects that will reinvest in the campus and in the long run save money for taxpayers and students alike,

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: We believe that sweeping existing auxiliary balances to fund financial aid in particular is (and has been) an inappropriate use of these student-generated monies and is furthering a dangerous and unsustainable precedent. The State Legislative and Executive Branches have made contradictory decisions regarding this type of budget strategy and we feel that it is time for a definitive decision on such matters,

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: We believe that students in a rudimentary sense deserve a say in how student generated monies are being used, regardless of the fund type that the monies are held in,

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That we, the representatives of the UW-Green Bay student body, ask that state legislators take into account the facts and arguments we have put forth here when considering how the Governor's current budget proposal will impact the students of the University of Wisconsin System,

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay Student Government Association officially support the sentiments expressed here pertaining to the currently proposed Wisconsin State 2009-'11 biennium budget and authorize the Executive Branch of the UW-Green Bay Student Government Association to take action to that end,

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Chancellor David Ward, Provost William Laatsch, Faculty Senate Chair Illene Noppe, the Student Governance groups of the UW System, the United Council of UW Students, and all recipients of the aforementioned letter, with the intent that each party will analyze the issue and consider taking an official stance as they see fit, whether it be through this document or by another means.