



Statement in favor of AB 1108 Equalizing the UW System GPR Funding

Thank you, Chairman Murphy and distinguished members of the Committee on Colleges and Universities.

My name is Jeffery Knight and I serve as the President and CEO of the Greater Whitewater Committee, Inc. (GWC). GWC is an action-oriented group committed to working with citizens, elected officials, and policy makers to identify, craft, and implement a pro-business agenda. This agenda advances the economic, educational, and social policies required to energize and secure the Whitewater Area's economic future as well as protect Whitewater's quality of life.

The GWC works closely with the City of Whitewater, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, the Whitewater Unified School District, and the local community. Its goal is to educate, advocate, and develop ideas that make Whitewater a destination of choice to visit and live, including increasing the number of students attending UW-Whitewater. During our annual meeting in February, GWC members authorized our continued efforts in securing a fairer GPR funding formula.

We recognize that there is more to a student's college experience than what happens on campus. Businesses and local student housing play a huge role in the entire student experience. As a result, we also share in the economic boost this affords the broader regional community.

Over the last three budget cycles, GWC members have become concerned due to the consternation created between UW-W faculty, staff, students, and administration related to budget issues. Our concern is that as enrollment rates decrease due to less high school graduates, UW-W will have to offer fewer services to their students; services that other campuses have the ability to offer because they have more revenue.

We believe that each university should receive an equal amount of GPR funding per student. Currently, the formula used to distribute this money does not properly take into account each University's size and population, leaving UW-W to average \$1,750 less than the students in the 11 other UW-System campuses. We believe that, as most students attend a comprehensive university near their home, that this formula is not fair to families from the area and their students who pay their fair share of taxes into the state. GWC is requesting that the legislature adopt Assembly Bill 1108.

Current GPR funding for UW-Whitewater is the lowest of all the UW campuses. Due to the current formula used in the UW-System, UW-Whitewater receives approximately \$1,747 support per full-time equivalent student compared to the average support of \$3,499 for the eleven comprehensive universities in the system. This means that the students at Whitewater average about **\$1,750 less** than the average state-wide. In fact, eight of these 11 campuses receive less than the average amount of support. While Whitewater receives only about 50% of what other campuses average, the university still pays the same amount in fees. Attached please find a UW System GPR funding comparison chart that depicts data from the last ten years, despite the fact that this funding formula has been used for much longer.



In the process of working with the legislature on this bill, I had the opportunity to meet with Regent President Edmund Manydeeds, Regent Vice President Karen Walsh, UW-W Interim Chancellor Henderson and two UW-System lobbyists to discuss efforts to create an equitable GPR funding formula. It was a very positive meeting and I left with the impression that Regent leadership takes this matter very seriously. However, at the time, the Board of Regents were incredibly busy conducting the search for a new UW System president and forming a search committee for a new chancellor for UW Madison. I felt comfortable that they were serious on the issue but due to their workload, I have not seen anything in writing to move this forward. We did let them know that if we weren't successful in this legislative session, our plan is to redouble our efforts and broaden our group to include other communities hurt by the current funding formula.

GWC is requesting that the UW System GPR funding be equalized over the next eight years and that Assembly Bill 1108 be adopted. We have serious concerns that as the predicted enrollment of high school students drops and supply of students shrinks, that a lack of adequate funding will impact UW-W's future. The university needs to thrive and continue to provide exceptional educational experiences for its students, which is difficult to do without equitable resources.

I do want to commend the UW System, UW-Whitewater administration, faculty, staff and students for the amazing way they came back to campus in the fall and proved to all that you can remain safe and still pursue an academic degree. Please help show them our appreciation by passing AB 1108t.

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	2011	2012	2013	2014	2020
Eau Claire	\$3,327	\$2,873	\$2,854	\$2,928	\$2,806
Green Bay	\$3,279	\$2,824	\$2,886	\$2,935	\$3,151
La Crosse	\$2,611	\$2,146	\$2,021	\$2,054	\$2,161
Oshkosh	\$3,173	\$2,662	\$2,573	\$2,565	\$2,691
Parkside	\$5,181	\$4,790	\$4,742	\$4,664	\$4,968
Platteville	\$2,755	\$2,296	\$2,243	\$2,145	\$2,946
River Falls	\$3,304	\$2,910	\$3,043	\$2,915	\$3,081
Stevens Point	\$3,142	\$2,609	\$2,598	\$2,644	\$3,755
Stout	\$3,485	\$3,043	\$3,003	\$2,937	\$3,219
Superior	\$6,380	\$6,522	\$6,806	\$6,913	\$7,964
Whitewater	\$2,096	\$1,583	\$1,553	\$1,381	\$1,747
Average	\$3,521	\$3,114	\$3,120	\$3,098	\$3,499
Dif	\$1,425	\$1,532	\$1,568	\$1,717	\$1,752
total loss for UWW	\$14,983,194.29	\$16,552,682.08	\$16,830,880.16	\$18,696,580.71	\$18,861,121.78

