The Honorable Alberta Darling  
The Honorable Robin Vos  
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Finance  
Wisconsin State Legislature  
Room 305 East, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702

Re: Support for Public Authority Status for the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Dear Senator Darling and Representative Vos:

As members of the Board of Visitors to the College of Letters & Science, we are writing to voice our support for the New Badger Partnership and public authority status for the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As you will see in the list of signatories, each of us is a UW-Madison graduate. Many of us live in Wisconsin and most of us grew up in the state. We are Badgers for life. We know the investments that Wisconsinites have made in their flagship university and its students. We believe that public authority status is the best way to protect those investments for future generations.

As Board members we advise the Dean of Letters & Science and support the priority initiatives of the college. Letters & Science constitutes about half of the university and is the home to core fields such as chemistry, computer sciences, mathematics, English, communication arts, foreign languages, economics, and social work. It teaches many of the required courses for majors in the professional schools and colleges, provides well over 50 percent of the undergraduate instruction, and awards half of all UW-Madison undergraduate degrees.

We strongly believe in the University and the College. Individually and collectively, we believe in returning our time, talent, and treasure to our university. This past year we committed, as a Board, to provide over $1 million to the University. A good portion of these funds are dedicated to need-based scholarships that will enhance access for undergraduate students.

We believe in students, and we believe that public authority status will provide significant benefits to Wisconsin students who come to UW-Madison. Whether they enter in their first year or transfer from a UW System school or technical college, they leave grounded in up-to-date knowledge and skills. They learn from faculty who are leaders in their fields and who often are doing research that produces breakthrough knowledge and skills.
Letters & Science faculty bring over $100 million of dollars in competitive research funds to Wisconsin each year. They mentor undergraduate projects, include undergraduates in their research lab groups, and advise students on academic and career choices. Public authority status and greater flexibility will preserve UW-Madison’s traditions of educational excellence by removing obstacles that make it increasingly difficult to compete against other universities in recruiting, rewarding, and retaining professors of this caliber.

We also believe the New Badger Partnership is vital to preserving and enhancing UW-Madison’s contributions to Wisconsin’s economic growth and community well-being. Increased flexibility and public authority status will help UW-Madison by addressing problems and costs associated with operating within large, and at times cumbersome, bureaucracies that can be at odds with the efficient management of a major research and educational institution.

We strongly urge you to support the New Badger Partnership and public authority status for UW-Madison.

Sincerely,

Patricia Donovan Wright

Signed on behalf of the following members of
College of Letters and Science Board of Visitors, April 2011

Stephen Bablitch (BA ’76, English and history, JD ’79)
Senior Vice President, Aurora Health Care,
Milwaukee, WI

Herman Baumann III (BA ’75, journalism)
Founder and Owner, Green Line Strategies LLC,
Inverness, IL/Madison, WI

John “Jack” Bolz (BS ’50, economics)
Retired Vice President Corporate Affairs, Oscar Mayer
Co., Madison, WI

Nancy Taylor Borghesi (BA ’69, economics)
Retired Senior Vice President, CCC Information
Services, Hilton Head Island, SC/Egg Harbor, WI

James Burgess (BA ’58, journalism)
Retired Publisher, Wisconsin State Journal,
Madison, WI

Jerry Frautschi (BS ’56, economics)
Retired Vice Chairman of the Board,
Webcrafters, Inc. Madison, WI

Mary Clare Freeman (BA ’48, speech)
Retired Speech and Language Clinician, Wausau, WI

Mike Jones (BA ’81, history and philosophy)
Vice President Corporate Affairs, MillerCoors Brewing
Co., Milwaukee, WI

William Jordan (BA ’73, journalism)
Vice Chairman, Air Wisconsin Airlines Corporation,
Appleton, WI

Terry Haller (MS ’71, mathematics)
Retired Principal and Director, Co-Founder,
Excel Inns of America, Madison, WI

Cora Marrett (MA ’65, PhD ’68, sociology)
Acting Director, National Science Foundation,
Arlington, VA/Madison, WI

David Meissner (BS ’60, history)
Retired Chair, Public Policy Forum, Milwaukee, WI

continued
Bill Rayne (BS ’54, economics)
Retired Senior Vice President, Dain Bosworth, Spring Green, WI

Joy Amundson (BA ’76, journalism)
President, Amundson Partners, Lake Forest, IL

Barbara Arnold (BA ’73, sociology and social work, JD ’76)
Vice President, Toyota Motor Sales USA, Los Angeles, CA

Carol Carmichael (BS ’85, chemistry course)
Faculty Associate in Applied Engineering and Science, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA

Kenneth Ciriacks (BS ’58, geology)
Retired Vice President Technology, BP Amoco, Chicago, IL/Tucson, AZ

George Hamel Jr. (BA ’80, communication arts)
Managing Partner, ValueAct Capital, San Francisco, CA

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Judith Carlson Kelley (BS ’59, journalism)
Retired Development Officer, Oregon State University, Portland, OR

Kay Koplovitz (BS ’67, radio & television & film)
Founder, Koplovitz & Co., New York, NY

David Kurrasch (BA ’73, radio & television & film)
President, Global Payment Advisors, San Francisco, CA

Walter Mirisch (BA ’42, history)
Motion Picture Producer and President, The Mirisch Corporation, Los Angeles, CA

Alice Mortenson (BS ’62, history)
Director, M.A. Mortenson Co., Minneapolis, MN

Joy Picus (BA ’51, political science)
Former City Council member, Los Angeles, CA

Steven Pogorzelski (BA ’83, journalism)
CEO, Clickfuel, Boston, MA

Stanley Sher (BS ’56, history)
Of Counsel, Cozen O’Connor, Washington, DC

Patricia Donovan Wright (BSE ’74, Journalism and Communication Arts)
President, Donovan Wright Advisors LLC, Katy, TX

cc: Senator Luther Olsen
    Senator Sheila Harsdorf
    Senator Joe Leibham
    Senator Glenn Grothman
    Senator Randy Hopper
    Senator Lena Taylor
    Senator Robert Jauch
    Representative Dan Meyer
    Representative Dan LeMahieu
    Representative John Nygren
    Representative Pat Strachota
    Representative Joel Kleefisch
    Representative Tamara Grigsby
    Representative Jennifer Shilling