



**WISCONSIN**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

July 9, 2015

The Honorable Scott Walker  
Governor  
115 East, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Governor Walker:

I am writing to request that you veto provisions in Senate Bill 21 regarding changes in tenure – particularly language about faculty layoffs – and shared governance policy.

Over its 165-year history, the University of Wisconsin–Madison has built an international reputation for the highest quality research and teaching. That reputation was created with the support of Wisconsin taxpayers and has enabled the university to consistently hire top-ranked faculty and staff. The inclusion of the current language allowing termination or layoff of faculty for certain budget or program decisions (Section 1214R of Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 21) has created negative national publicity that will hinder the ability of UW–Madison to attract and retain world-class faculty, many of whom bring substantial federal and private sector investment into the state of Wisconsin.

Language that allows the layoff or termination of tenured faculty when there is just cause, financial emergency, or program discontinuance for educational reasons would align UW System with the standards of peer institutions and the American Association of University Professors. The language currently in Senate Bill 21 does not do that and puts us at odds with standard layoff language at our competitor institutions. For us to attract and retain the best faculty in the global higher education marketplace, it is imperative that UW–Madison not be seen as offering a less attractive package than can be found at our peer institutions.

I also ask that you veto language that changes the role of shared governance groups at UW System schools (Sections 1139-1142). Like most large organizations, universities run best when there is broad consultation, which has historically been the case at UW-Madison. Our success as an institution is testament to the effectiveness of a transparent, inclusive process that values input from all of our campus stakeholders. Tinkering with this successful operating formula is unnecessary.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Rebecca M. Blank  
Chancellor

**Chancellor Rebecca M. Blank**  
**Morgridge Friends Distinguished Chair of Leadership**

Bascom Hall University of Wisconsin–Madison 500 Lincoln Drive Madison, Wisconsin 53706  
608-262-8967 Fax: 608-262-8333 TTY 608-263-2473