

Badgers United: Wisconsin Policy Forum study findings sound alarm on Wisconsin higher education

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MADISON, WI (December 15, 2020) — Badgers United, a 501(c)(3) that operates independently from UW-Madison, is suggesting data-driven solutions after the release of worrying findings in the Wisconsin Policy Forum's study on higher education.

The Wisconsin Policy Forum report is the first independent, comprehensive study of higher education in Wisconsin. The study covers a wide range of issues from falling state support to the decline of enrollment. Critically, it concludes that the future of higher education and our flagship university's world-class status is in jeopardy – harming the economic impact higher education provides to our state. Significant threats include:

- **National Comparison Shows Wisconsin At Risk**

- For decades, Wisconsin has slashed investment. With the current revenue cuts from the ongoing global pandemic, UW-Madison is significantly under-supported by the State compared nationally to peers.

- **Frozen Tuition Restricts Necessary Revenue**

- The freeze on in-state undergraduate tuition has restricted a vital funding stream, depriving the University of desperately needed funding.

- **Lack Of Financial Flexibility**

- UW-Madison cannot access credit markets to secure the necessary resources to mitigate the ongoing revenue crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Limited Investment In The Future

- Low faculty pay, a lack of investment in research & development spending and deferred maintenance of crumbling infrastructure raises significant concern for the financial health and performance of UW-Madison and the state's larger economy.

"Wisconsin has a proud history as a leader in higher education and what's happening is

appalling," said Peter Kies, Chair of the Badgers United Board. "UW-Madison has never been in a more precarious position and now is the time for transformative policy decisions to secure the future of our world-class land grant university."

To address the crisis, Badgers United has put forward a slate of data-driven solutions for the Legislature's consideration including increasing in-state support for UW-Madison, a thaw of the in-state undergraduate tuition freeze, providing UW-Madison with the financial flexibility to access credit markets, and investing in the future of UW-Madison.

VIEW LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

These legislative measures will offer aid in the short term while maintaining UW-Madison's powerful economic impact to drive the State's recovery during the financial crisis created by COVID-19.

"These recommendations are driven by data and directly address the disturbing trend lines

highlighted in the study," said former President of the UW System Katharine Lyall. "The start of the 2021 legislative session is just around the corner, the problems in higher education can't wait any longer. Every day of inaction risks UW-Madison's \$15 billion in economic impact - activity which impacts all 72 counties."

Additional Assets:

- Read The Full WPF Study
- View The Badgers United's Solutions Summary Sheet
- To Learn More About Badgers United visit www.badgersunited.org