

Gary Hebl: UW-Madison welcomes new chancellor

Posted on Monday, May 23, 2022

The column below reflects the views of the author, and these opinions are neither endorsed nor supported by WisOpinion.com.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has long been a target for Wisconsin Republicans hostile to public education. The University has faced years of cuts from Republican budgets as well as constant micromanaging from GOP legislators about who must be allowed to speak on campus and what must (and must not) be taught in classes. Instead of constant attacks on our flagship University, we must stand together to support and strengthen it.

The latest iteration of GOP attacks comes with the hiring of the new UW Chancellor, Law Professor and UCLA Law School Dean Jennifer Mnookin. Mnookin was selected to be Rebecca Blank's successor as UW Chancellor by the UW Board of Regents, made up of appointees from both the Walker and Evers administrations. This was not some partisan pick by Democrats. This was an open, bipartisan process.

However, that has not stopped partisan hacks from playing political games. Almost immediately after the announcement, Wisconsin GOP launched what appears to be a prepared, coordinated effort to discredit Mnookin on extremely specious grounds. One legislator, career politician Sen. Stephen Nass, even threatened to withhold UW funding should Mnookin take the helm at UW. Please remember that next time Republicans feign outrage at "cancel culture."

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

UW Madison is the jewel of the Wisconsin higher education system. Year after year it produces some of the best-educated graduates in the country. The research done through UW Madison has helped innumerable people in so many different ways. We

should be lifting up our school systems, not using them as political pawns. We must stop trying to treat every single event as an opportunity to rile up the base and divide our citizens. Having a new chancellor at UW Madison should be an opportunity to celebrate the future of our school and our university students, not seen as a chance to score a few cheap political points.

I, for one, am very excited for Jennifer Mnookin to take over as UW Chancellor. I am optimistic about what the future holds for her and UW. We must ensure that our schools prepare students for life in society and I am hopeful that Chancellor Mnookin will ensure that the student body is well prepared for their future.

- Hebl, D-Sun Prairie, represents the 46th Assembly District.