

Rep. Anderson: Response to deal between UW Regents and Wisconsin Republicans to dismantle inclusionary efforts

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(Fitchburg) – Wisconsin Republicans, the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, and Universities of Wisconsin President Jay Rothman have struck a deal to effectively dismantle UW System’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives in exchange for already-approved pay raises for University staff. State Representative Jimmy Anderson (D- Fitchburg), a member of the Assembly Committee on Colleges & Universities, released the following statement in response:

Dismantling support for students that benefit from DEI efforts is outrageous. Using staff pay as a bargaining chip to enforce a far right agenda is appalling, and I am shocked that the Board of Regents and President Rothman are going along with it. Republicans are using this backroom deal to subvert the legislative process because Republicans know that their agenda is wildly unpopular and cannot pass under the normal democratic process.

As a disabled person of color who has benefited from DEI initiatives, it does not sit well with me that the Board, Republicans, and President Rothman believe that they can put a price tag on diversity. I will be damned if I stay quiet as Republicans try to lift the ladder up behind them, denying many underrepresented Wisconsinites access to higher education.

It's long past time for Republicans to stop fighting these nonsensical culture wars that only appeal to far-right fanatics. We have to do what is right for our students and our state, and that means approve the pay raises and continue to fund DEI

efforts in our state institutions of higher learning.