



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**Katrina Shankland**  
71<sup>st</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

May 28, 2019

Senator Alberta Darling  
Room 317 East  
Wisconsin State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53703

Representative John Nygren  
Room 308 East  
Wisconsin State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Co-chairs Darling and Nygren and members of the Joint Committee on Finance:

I am writing today in strong support of provisions in the biennial budget which allocate funds for University of Wisconsin System capacity building initiatives, specifically to increase investment in the UW-Stevens Point Paper Science and Chemical Engineering programs. I also encourage you to introduce and support a motion to fulfill the Wisconsin Institute for Sustainable Technology's (WIST) request for \$880,000 in funding.

Capacity-building initiatives at UW System campuses are critical to enhancing student success, improving the state's talent pipeline, and encouraging innovation. However, to accomplish this, additional funding is needed. The UW System requested \$25 million for capacity-building in their 2019-21 budget request, which would help add hundreds of students to high-demand fields and increase student success while helping to address our state's workforce needs. Governor Evers proposed \$45 million in his state budget, and we hope you will support it.

Within the UW System capacity-building request, we encourage you to specifically support funding to increase investment in the UW-Stevens Point Paper Science and Chemical Engineering programs and remove the funding cap on the program. An investment in these growing programs could lead to a significant increase in the number of students majoring in Paper Science/Engineering and Chemical Engineering, help to create the foundation of the proposed Environmental Engineering program, and add approximately 20 graduates per year across UWSP engineering programs. This will develop the state paper industry's workforce.

Additionally, as you have supported in years past, I respectfully request that you introduce and support a motion to allocate \$880,000 in state funding to the Wisconsin Institute for Sustainable Technology. These funds will allow WIST to thrive and increase their involvement with research and workforce development as it relates to the agriculture and pulp/paper industries, as well as supporting new efforts relating to the food packaging and forest products industries.

I hope you will support these vital provisions in the state budget. Please let me know if you have any questions, as I'd be happy to discuss this with you further and appreciate your attention to this pressing matter. Thank you for your consideration and service as members of the Joint Finance Committee.

Sincerely,

Katrina Shankland  
State Representative  
71<sup>st</sup> Assembly District