

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 25th, 2021

Contact: Nada Elmikashfi, 608-266-5342

Rep. Hong statement on clinical programs at the University of Wisconsin Law School

MADISON - The University of Wisconsin Law School plans to reduce or eliminate stipends and tuition remission for summer clinics. They are also moving to eliminate the current yearlong clinical experience, diluting it to a low-commitment one or two-semester affair. If implemented, this change would hurt students, clients, and clinical professors alike, and significantly damage public interest legal education in the state of Wisconsin.

Representative Hong released the following statement:

“The incredible clinical programs at the University of Wisconsin represent the best of the Wisconsin Idea. Ending yearlong clinics and cutting funding to summer clinical programs will not only impact the experience of our public interest law students, but stand to harm those who greatly rely on the work they do.

For decades, Wisconsin Law students have gone into the community through clinical programs and expanded access to justice. Clinical programs have been so successful, the Wisconsin Supreme Court voted *this term* to expand student practice eligibility to increase access to justice, partially based on the success of yearlong clinical programs. Thus, Wisconsin Law should be expanding clinical programs, not limiting them.

I understand that the pandemic and funding hurdles perpetuated by a lack of state support have put the university in a tough corner -- but it doesn't have to come down to these options. The students and community members, especially those of historically marginalized backgrounds, stand to lose out the most.

I urge Wisconsin Law to meet the requests of the Coalition to Save Our Clinics and reverse any impending cuts to summer clinics, ensure the continued full funding of yearlong clinics, and include law students in the decision-making process.”

###