



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Memo: UW Capital Project Cost Increases The Result of Gov. Walker's Failed Fiscal Management**

**MADISON-** This week, University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross released the UW System's complete budget request for the upcoming 2017-19 budget. While there has been plenty of attention on Republicans' decision to cut Wisconsin's universities by \$565 million since taking control of state government, another crisis is looming: the Governor's decision to all but halt the UW's maintenance and infrastructure program. A Legislative Fiscal Bureau memo released today by Rep. Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) shows that 7 capital budget items ignored by the Governor in the 2015-17 budget have now increased in cost by nearly \$30 million.

**"Budgeting is all about investing in priorities. Unfortunately, Republicans have refused to make the hard decisions when it comes to investing in our infrastructure,"** said Rep. Hintz. **"In order to put our roads on the credit card, Gov. Walker and Republicans put a halt on our whole capital budget. However, as this memo shows those needs don't go away. Higher education in Wisconsin is already suffering historic cuts in Wisconsin, and delaying projects only compounds the cost."**

In addition to additional costs of construction, the Governor has also failed to fund key maintenance projects to existing buildings on UW campuses, known as "all agency" funding. For the first time, our universities had to specifically request this money in their budget just to make repairs. A separate memo prepared by LFB shows the cost of deferring these needs is expected to cost an additional \$13.5 million in future budgets. These projects include repairs such as: *'elevator replacements and fire alarm system upgrades; modifications for handicapped accessibility; replacement of emergency generators and worn-out heating; ventilating and cooling systems; major repairs to roofs, utility structures, walls and loading docks'*.

**"The Republicans keep saying the state has issued its lowest level of debt in 20 years as a way to cover up their increased borrowing for roads. But they did it by not doing a capital budget. Our state – whether it be our roads or state buildings or universities – is literally falling apart,"** said Rep. Hintz, **"We now have double the amount of money going to pay off road debt – one of five of our transportation dollars. Meanwhile, as projects and repairs are ignored, costs to maintain our infrastructure are steadily increasing. What family or business makes decisions like that?"**

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