



SENATOR LENA TAYLOR

a Champion for...

www.LenaTaylor.org

Higher Education

Lena's proactive higher education efforts

The Higher Ed, Lower Debt Act

Lena co-sponsored this bill to propose a new agency to refinance loans and to offer a tax deduction to help people pay off student loans. ([2013 SB 376](#))

Creating a college application week

Lena introduced this bill to waive the University of Wisconsin and technical college application fees for one week each year. The bill would have created a college application week where Wisconsin high school juniors and seniors could apply to University of Wisconsin and technical colleges for free.

([2016 SB 396](#))

"Flexible Option" degrees at UW

Lena supported new degrees at UW-Milwaukee offered to busy adults with a work schedule. These "Flexible Option" degrees make it easier and more affordable for working adults to go back to school with competency testing and online class schedules.

Increasing Grant Funding

As a member of the Joint Committee on Finance, Lena worked to increase grant funding for higher education. WHEG-UW PROGRAM FUNDING increased by \$8,024,200 (14.6%) in 09-10 and \$8,465,500 (13.4%) in 10-11. Tuition grant program increased \$1,053,600. WHEG funding for technical students also increased by \$1,864,100.

([2009-2011 Biennial Budget](#))

"College opens endless possibilities for young people and adult learners. We should keep those doors open to all who want to walk through."

--- Senator Lena Taylor



Lena rallied with UW students and workers after Governor Scott Walker proposed the union busting Act 10, which eliminated collective bargaining rights for UW faculty and employees.

Lena fights for higher education

Opposing Budget Cuts

A college degree represents the gateway to the middle class. Wisconsin is blessed to have one of the nation's most prestigious public university systems. As a proud graduate of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Lena was appalled to see Republicans vote to slash \$250 million from the 2015-2017 University of Wisconsin System budget.

She opposed these cuts as a member of the Joint Committee on Finance and opposed them as a mother who wants our children to get the best education possible. We need to invest in our colleges today to create the skilled workforce of tomorrow.

Making College Affordable

Since 1978, college tuition and fees have increased by over 1,120 percent. While college becomes more and more unaffordable, the importance of a college education is greater now than ever.

There are 815,000 Wisconsin residents with federal student loan debt. Each student is leaving college with an average debt of \$22,400. It is a tragedy for Wisconsinites to start out thousands of dollars in the debt for investing in their education. That's why Lena supported funding the Wisconsin Covenant program and co-sponsored the Higher Ed, Lower Debt proposal to allow students to refinance their student loans just like we can with our mortgages.

Campus diversity

College athletics is about more than just sports. Lena was deeply dismayed to learn of the firing of longtime men's basketball coach Rob Jeter. Rather than be fired, Coach Jeter should have been commended for his team's performance on the court, in the classroom and in our community. Coach Jeter was highly accomplished and led the Panthers to a 184-170 record during his time at UW-Milwaukee. His firing puts the spotlight on issues of diversity when it comes to administrative positions in places like the UW-Milwaukee athletic program. Diversity sets a campus climate of inclusion, which in turn impacts the campus' ability to be a true community partner where students receive a top notch education.



Senator Taylor listens to the public voice concerns about Governor Walker's 2015 state budget while at a hearing at a UW campus.

Fighting Tuition Increases

Adjusted for inflation, tuition now costs three times as much as it did in 1980. UW-Madison now offers less state-funded financial aid than any other Big Ten institution. Already, 73.5% of UW students are forced to take burdensome student loans. We need education that works for everyone. Lena supports holding the line on tuition increases.

Experienced Leader who fights for higher education.