

UW System may receive grants via Jobs Act

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UW-Madison and other UW System schools may receive grants or funding for job-related initiatives if a new bill introduced by Senate Democrats makes it to the floor in the next legislative session.

The bill, co-authored by state Sen. Julie Lassa, D-Stevens Point, and state Sen. Pat Kreitlow, D-Chippewa Falls, focuses on expanding tax credit opportunities to businesses and offering grants aimed at education and workforce training.

The Connecting, Opportunity, Research, and Entrepreneurship Jobs Act may offer grants to campuses within the UW System which intend to "commercialize new technologies faster," according to a statement

The C.O.R.E. Jobs Act also plans to model UW-Madison's G. Steven Burrill Business Plan Competition at other schools within the UW System. The business plan competition currently offers a \$10,000 prize to the student with the top business plan.

UW System spokesperson David Giroux said he had not heard many details about the C.O.R.E. Jobs Act, but said it is "good news" that state lawmakers see the university system as a job creator.

"The fact that they are looking at the research we do and the outreach we do with the business community as part of this larger job creation package is affirmation that these are steps in the right direction," Giroux said.

Giroux said because details on how the legislation would be funded are not yet clear, it is premature to state the university's position on the act.

"We'll be looking at it very closely and working with those offices to understand more about what the university can do to strengthen the state's economic position," Giroux said.

The act would also increase available tax credits for Accelerate Wisconsin, a program aimed at increasing investment in Wisconsin businesses, by \$3 million for 2010.

The legislation also includes an employee education investment tax credit, which offers incentives to businesses who pay for technical or university education for employees.

Lassa said the job package was the result of consultation with the UW System, members of the business community and investors.

"We believe the result is a balanced jobs package that focuses on our state's competitive advantages," she said in a statement.

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