



MELISSA AGARD
STATE SENATOR
DEMOCRATIC LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Republicans Continue to Hold UW Employees' Pay Hostage

MADISON – Today, the Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER) took executive action on the state compensation plan approved by the State Legislature earlier this year. The Republican co-chairs refused to take up the UW System compensation plan due to their objection to the presence of DEI programs. Senate Democratic Leader Melissa Agard (D-Madison) released the following statement:

“I am deeply disappointed by the decision made by Republicans on JCOER to exclude UW System employees from today’s proceedings. I again call on Senate President Kapenga and Assembly Speaker Vos to stop holding UW employees hostage over their political games.

“Republicans continue to prioritize sowing division with their culture wars over honoring the hardworking folks who make our university system among the best in the nation. The UW System is one of Wisconsin’s greatest treasures, driving local economies across the state and preparing people for our workforce.

“Holding up cost of living adjustments for UW employees, [which make up nearly 50 percent of Wisconsin’s public employee workforce](#), is absolutely shameful. Republicans could have voted to increase wages for half of our state employee workforce today, but they chose to leave UW System off the agenda because of Speaker Vos’ resistance to initiatives that increase inclusion on our campuses. Republicans are playing politics with people’s lives and pocketbooks.”

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Senator Melissa Agard was elected by her colleagues to serve as Senate Democratic Leader in November of 2022. Senator Agard represents the 16th Senate District, encompassing Sun Prairie, Cottage Grove, Monona, Fitchburg, McFarland, and parts of Madison.