



# Kristin Dassler-Alfheim

STATE SENATOR • SENATE DISTRICT 18

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FUNDING FOR CRITICAL UW-OSHKOSH RENOVATION INCLUDED IN 2025-27 CAPITAL BUDGET

*Capital budget also provides vital security investment at Winnebago Mental Health Institute*

MADISON, WI - Today, Governor Evers released his 2025-2027 capital budget, which includes a \$137.5 million allocation for the necessary renovation of UW-Oshkosh's Polk Learning Commons.

"UW-Oshkosh graduates are more likely to stay and work in our region, which means investing in UW-Oshkosh is an investment in the Fox Valley workforce. This project ensures that UW-Oshkosh remains an attractive option for prospective students," said State Senator Dassler-Alfheim, who met with Governor Evers to discuss the importance of the project for the Fox Valley.

According to UW-Oshkosh's First Destination Outcomes Report, 84.4% of Wisconsin residents and nearly 31% of non-residents who graduate from UW-Oshkosh remain in Wisconsin afterwards.

"Libraries are collaborative spaces for students. It's where they come together and learn how to effectively communicate and work together – soft-skills that are in high demand but can't always be learned in a lecture hall. After touring the space in February and seeing first-hand what condition the library is in, I can tell you that this project is absolutely essential for the continued success of the university and its students," said Sen. Dassler-Alfheim.

The proposed project would reduce the overall square footage of the current facility, saving in operational costs while providing more flexible space to adapt to future needs. The current building was constructed in 1962 with another wing added in 1969. In May of 2024, over 50% of the building's rated components were found to be in "Poor" condition. The project will demolish and reconstruct the 1962 wing and renovate the 1969 wing, resulting in a facility that is more accessible and energy efficient and saving an estimated \$52,000 annually.

The Governor's capital budget proposal also includes \$61.2 million to refurbish utility and service tunnels at the Winnebago Mental Health Institute and \$3.9 million to design critical heating and chiller replacements at UW-Oshkosh.

These allocations are in addition to specific priorities Sen. Dassler-Alfheim advocated for on behalf of the Fox Valley, which are contained in the Governor's operational budget. These include: competitive local projects and emergency medical services grants that could be used to modernize the Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue Training grounds and replace the Appleton Fire Department's Self-Contained Breathing

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Apparatus Units (SCBAs); child care grant funds that could support much needed second-shift childcare spaces in Oshkosh; and permitting positions for Lake Winnebago that would ensure clean water protections.

“The Fox Valley is a major driver of economic activity, and I appreciate the Governor's recognition of that in his budget proposals,” Sen. Dassler-Alfheim concluded.

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