

Lawmakers Drop Walker's Plan to Spin Off UW System

Written by GBP Staff
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/uwgb-student-s5.jpg>



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MADISON - Republicans in the state Legislature's Joint Finance committee abandoned a proposal on Tuesday by GOP Gov. Scott Walker to spin off the University of Wisconsin System as a separate government authority.

Walker had proposed the spin off as a carrot to UW officials to offset his proposed \$300 million in budget cuts to the University. Democrats have argued that none of the cuts would be needed if the Walker Administration had simply accepted federal funding for Medicaid.

Walker had wanted to make the university system a separate public authority, which he argued would give it even more freedom to manage its budgets.

The co-chairs of the Joint Finance committee, Rep. John Nygren (R-Marinette) and Sen. Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) said they hoped to reduce Walker's proposed cuts, but they didn't know by how much. Nygren and Darling say they are awaiting estimates this week that will tell them whether revenue will be higher than earlier projections.

The two said they would free the system from state procurement requirements and other unspecified mandates, which they said would help mitigate the cuts. They will put together their plan later this month.

Today's move leaves UW supporters with neither self governance nor the money they feel is needed to run the System over the next two years. The Joint Finance Committee hopes to finish making changes to Walker's budget proposal, including how much to give UW and other changes in operation, by the end of May.

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Walker, a likely presidential candidate, has said he will announce his decision on running for the White House once the budget is passed.

The UW budget cut is one of the most controversial in Walker's budget. He also called for freezing tuition for two years and limiting future increases to no more than the rate of inflation.