

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michael Zimmer, michael.zimmer@gmail.com

Dear members of the State Legislature:

As library and information science students, scholars, professionals, and educators, we are dedicated to maximizing and defending people's free access to information and knowledge. Given this professional and ethical obligation, the undersigned individual members of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Information Studies community urge the removal of sections 23-26 in the currently pending UW System Budget Bill.

Advanced and affordable broadband Internet networking is critical to the success of students, researchers and industry statewide. Services such as WISNET, and related consortial connectivity projects like Internet2 and EDUCAUSE, provide vital access to information for libraries, schools, historical societies, museums, hospitals and local municipalities across Wisconsin.

The "telecommunications" section of the legislation as proposed would severely limit broadband connectivity throughout the state of Wisconsin and would cut the networked information services various libraries and educational institutions provide to the citizens of the state of Wisconsin, such as Internet access, networking and collaboration, and online education and job training. It would also prohibit the UW System from being a member of Internet2 and other nonprofit consortia focusing on connectivity and information exchange, severely limiting state educators, researchers, and learners' ability to participate in global, national and regional research and learning development in areas from Alzheimer's prevention to astrophysics to child development.

The passage of sections 23-26 of the UW System Budget Bill would be devastating to the State. The undersigned individual members of the UW-Milwaukee School of Information Studies community strongly urge the legislature to remove these sections from the bill, and to support WISNET and other connectivity initiatives that provide vital access to information in support of the State's educational and economic development.

Signed,

(Signees are writing in their personal capacity, not as representatives of UW-Milwaukee or the School of Information Studies. Titles and affiliations are for identification purposes only, and imply no institutional endorsements.)

Liza Barry-Kessler, Doctoral Student
Edward Benoit III, Doctoral Student
Katie Blank, Assoc. Special Librarian
Dave Bloom, Researcher

Raina Bloom, Lecturer
Amy Cooper Cary, Director, Archival Studies Program
Karen Davies, Assistant Professor
Alexandra Dimitroff, Associate Professor
Melodie Fox, Doctoral Student
Thomas Haigh, Associate Professor
Rebecca Hall, Web Development & Marketing Coordinator
Catherine Hansen, Lecturer & Director, Professional Development Institute
Anthony Hoffmann, Doctoral Student
Adam Hudson, Lecturer
Jessica Hutchings, Graduate Advisor
Dick Kawooya, Senior Lecturer
Margaret Kipp, Assistant Professor
Sharon Lake, Graduate Advisor
Joyce M. Latham, Assistant Professor, Co-Director, Center for Information Policy Research,
Coordinator, Public Library Leadership Program
Peter J Lor, Visiting Professor
Marta Magnuson, Doctoral Student
Jeremy Mauger, Doctoral Student
Steven Miller, Senior Lecturer
Robert Nunez, Web Developer & Graduate Student
Wihelm Peekhaus, Post-doctoral Research Associate
Nick Proferes, Doctoral Student
Angela Sadowsky, Undergraduate Advisor
Betsy Schoeller, Lecturer & Distance Education Coordinator
Jim Schultz, Information Technology Specialist & Graduate Student
James Sweetland, Professor Emeritus
Gabiella Tato, Marketing Media Assistant
Thomas D. Walker, Associate Professor
Mary Wepking, Senior Lecturer & School Library Media Coordinator
Bonnie Withers, Lecturer
Iris Xie, Professor
Chad Zahrt, Assistant Dean
Michael Zimmer, Assistant Professor & Co-Director, Center for Information Policy Research