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## News Release

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 10, 2011

### **“Wisconsin Idea Partnership” proposes flexibility for all campuses**

*Facing \$250 million in cuts, UW institutions need tools to sustain quality and access*

MADISON, Wis. – Faced with the challenge of trimming budgets by more than \$250 million over the next two years, all University of Wisconsin System institutions need new managerial flexibilities to preserve educational quality and maintain broad college access.

The UW Board of Regents today officially endorsed a new proposal – the [Wisconsin Idea Partnership](#) – that would build on Governor Scott Walker’s proposal to offer new operational freedom to UW-Madison. The new proposal would preserve the core features and benefits for the flagship campus, while extending the new flexibilities to all UW campuses as part of a unified system.

UW System President Kevin P. Reilly noted that Governor Walker has expressed interest in helping all UW campuses benefit from new administrative flexibilities.

“The good news here is that Governor Walker recognizes that universities need to do business differently. We’ve been asking for new administrative and managerial flexibilities for years – decades perhaps – and this Governor gets it,” said Reilly. “We want to offer the Governor and the Legislature a way forward that is simple, reasonable, and equitable.”

“We propose an approach that does not require wholesale changes to large sections of existing State Law. We want to preserve the vast majority of language in Chapter 36, including all the shared governance rights of UW faculty, academic staff, and students. We want to be reasonable, so we will not ask for any more flexibilities than what the Governor has already shown he’s willing to do as part of his budget provisions concerning UW-Madison,” said Reilly.

“Most important, we want a budget alternative that is equitable – offering all the management tools to all UW campuses during the 2011-13 biennium. We will put forward a package of statutory changes that gives all UW campuses the necessary flexibilities to manage all the limited resources available, as members of a unified System,” said Reilly.

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The Regents formally endorsed the proposal and UW System officials promised to provide detailed statutory language to the Governor's office and the Legislature before the Joint Committee on Finance begins deliberations on the UW System budget.

Under the plan, each local UW campus would have new statutory authority in budgeting, tuition, human resources, capital planning, purchasing and other functions. Regents want the new framework to include specific performance measures, building upon the UW System's annual [accountability](#) reports.

"We need to be on record supporting these vital flexibilities for all UW institutions, and we need to clearly state our intent to delegate those flexibilities to each institution," said Regent President Charles Pruitt. "At the same time, we express our firm opposition to fracturing what is arguably one of the best Systems of public higher education in the country if not the world."

The Board of Regents will discuss the matter again in April at a regularly scheduled meeting to be held on the UW-Platteville campus.

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