

APPENDIX G - STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION

Passed-28-0-0  
04/07/08

51-R-35

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE  
STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION

IN SUPPORT OF A COMMUNITY-FRIENDLY JAIL AND COURTHOUSE

1           WHEREAS, the expansion project will cost a minimum of \$59.1  
2 million dollars for construction, not including upkeep,  
3 maintenance, and staffing; and

4           WHEREAS, this price will cause a significant property tax  
5 increase for the citizens of Eau Claire County over the next  
6 twenty years; and

7           WHEREAS, the students of UW-Eau Claire comprise a large  
8 portion of the downtown and Randall Park Neighborhood community;  
9 and

10           WHEREAS, the community, including the students of UW-Eau  
11 Claire, have not been allowed adequate say in the decision to  
12 approve this expansion; and

13           WHEREAS, the community has openly expressed their  
14 disapproval of this project; and

15           WHEREAS, it is a great disservice to the public to not  
16 collect public input through a referendum for a decision of this  
17 magnitude; and

18           WHEREAS, the current plan to expand the jail to the  
19 riverfront would force local businesses, home owners and renters  
20 to move; and

21           WHEREAS, there exist alternatives to the expansion that  
22 would allow for all of the threatened buildings to remain where  
23 they stand, preserve the riverfront land, and retain the  
24 integrity of the City of Eau Claire's recently approved and  
25 award-winning comprehensive plan; and

26           WHEREAS, in February, 2008, the U.S. Department of  
27 Justice's National Institute of Corrections (NIC) performed an  
28 assessment of the jail's capacity and occupancy; and

29           WHEREAS, part of the NIC report stated "Eau Claire is a  
30 safe community, the metropolitan area ranks 4<sup>th</sup> among 344  
31 metropolitan areas of its size, according to the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual  
32 Quinto Awards rating. The number of people in the crime prone  
33 age group is increasing at a rate that is about half the growth  
34 of the general population. People are pretty well behaved;" and

35           WHEREAS, the jail expansion does not reflect the safety or  
36 needs of the community; and

37           WHEREAS, the proposed jail expansion will not fix the  
38 county's problems, as stated in the NIC report: "In fact, a new  
39 jail, by itself, may not change very much. New bed space may be  
40 filled quickly. It is also possible that the new emerging  
41 programs will expand the total number of people under

42 correctional supervision, also fill to capacity, and have very  
43 little impact on the number of people in jail;" and

44 WHEREAS, a problem within the corrections system cannot be  
45 fixed through expanding the jail; and

46 WHEREAS, the university supports more communication and  
47 interaction with the community; UW-Eau Claire is currently  
48 undergoing strategic planning, which includes a plan to "create  
49 a 'front door' to connect the university and community, and  
50 inventory and communicate community engagement activities and  
51 resources;"

52 WHEREAS, money spent on a jail will reduce the amount of  
53 money allocated to treatment, education and alternatives to  
54 incarceration;

55 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the students of UW-Eau Claire  
56 oppose the current plan to expand the courthouse and jail east  
57 of the current county building into the riverfront region; and

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the students of UW-Eau Claire  
59 encourage the county to properly and thoroughly examine the  
60 other expansion options, including alternative to incarceration  
61 programs; and

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau  
63 Claire be more involved in decisions regarding the jail  
64 expansion, as encouraged in the NIC report; and

65           BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau  
66 Claire encourages the County Board to study the recommendations  
67 of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), by analyzing  
68 data and information to understand the symptom of jail  
69 overcrowding and to reduce the incarceration rate; and

70           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the students of UW-Eau Claire  
71 encourage the county to be a leader in recognizing the moral and  
72 fiscal costs of overreliance on incarceration, to address the  
73 systemic needs of our local justice system, dedicate itself to  
74 exploring alternatives to incarceration that will still preserve  
75 the safety of the community, and investigate other locations for  
76 incarceration that would not alter the park, residential and  
77 commercial property that already exists; and

78           BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that upon passage President Raymond  
79 French transmit copies of this resolution to Dr. Brian Levin-  
80 Stankevich, Chancellor; Dr. Steven Tallant, Provost/Vice  
81 Chancellor; Andrew Soll, Vice Chancellor, Business & Student  
82 Services; the Spectator; the Leader-Telegram; Mike Huggins, City  
83 Manager; Members of the County Board; Members of City Council;  
84 Frank Draxler, Project Manager, County Courthouse/Jail Expansion  
85 Project; Tom McCarty, Eau Claire County Administrator; Dr. Paul  
86 Kaldjian, Geography Professor; Dr. Marty Wood, Chair, University  
87 Senate; Ann Lapp, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Student

88 Development & Diversity; and Jodi Thesing-Ritter, Associate Dean  
89 of Student Development, Student Development & Diversity.

Submitted by:  
Emily Mattheisen, Student Life & Diversity Commission  
Director and Off-Campus Senator  
Michael Umhoefer, Off-Campus Senator  
Caroline Wee, Women's Issue Chairperson and  
Off-Campus Senator  
March 31, 2008