

Eighty-Eighth Regular Session

WEDNESDAY, December 14, 1988

The chief clerk makes the following entries under the above date.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

State of Wisconsin

Department of Natural Resources

December 9, 1988

To the Honorable the Legislature

Wisconsin's Acid Rain Bill, 1985 Wisconsin Act 296, requires the Department of Natural Resources to conduct two studies:

1. A study to determine the most cost effective method for reducing nitrogen oxide emissions in the state, and
2. A study of the environmental effects of nitrogen oxide emissions, and recommendations for achieving nitrogen oxide emission reductions.

The first study was to be completed by July 1, 1988. A report on the second study is due to the Governor and Chief Clerks of each house of the legislature by January 1, 1989.

We have experienced unavoidable delays due to personnel turnover and delay in contracting with a consultant to perform a portion of the work. We anticipate receiving the consultants report by the end of December, 1988. The consultants report will be utilized in preparing our reports. Therefore, the first study will not be completed until the end of the first quarter of 1989. The second study and report, which will incorporate information from the first study, will also be delayed. We will submit the report to the Governor and Chief Clerks the end of the second quarter of 1989.

Thank you for your patience on this matter. We will continue to keep all of the involved parties informed of our progress.

Sincerely,
C. D. BESADNY
Secretary

State of Wisconsin
Legislative Audit Bureau

December 30, 1988

To the Honorable the Legislature

We have completed an evaluation of the college parallel program offered by the Nicolet College District in north central Wisconsin as required by 1987 Wisconsin Act 27. The college parallel program, one of three such programs in the State's Vocational, Technical and Adult Education (VTAE) System, offers university-level liberal arts courses which are generally accepted for credit by the University of Wisconsin System. The Legislature in fiscal year (FY) 1988-89 appropriated \$970,000 general purpose revenue (GPR) for the program.

Our audit confirmed that, when compared with the other two-year liberal arts programs offered throughout the state in the VTAE and University systems, the Nicolet College's college parallel program has the highest cost per student, the highest level of state aid per student, and the lowest full-time equivalent student enrollment. While somewhat higher costs per student are to be expected given the College's low population base, other indicators suggest costs could be reduced.

College officials have recently instituted several initiatives to reduce college parallel and other program costs in FY 1988-89, and preliminary estimates suggest college parallel program costs could be reduced \$168,600 this fiscal year. Cost reductions could also influence the program's funding remain difficult until the College develops a revised budget which more accurately reflects the impact of recent cost reductions and changes in cost allocation methods.

However, the College's efforts to control costs may be only partially effective in the future unless the College also addresses certain management deficiencies which have historically contributed to higher costs. Therefore, we have recommended policy and program monitoring actions designed to improve overall management of the college parallel program.

Finally, some have argued that state support to the College's college parallel program should be reduced, given the high level of per-student state aid and other state budget priorities. Consequently, we discuss options for reducing state support for the college parallel program which the Legislature may wish to consider.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by board members and staff of Nicolet College, staff of the VTAE State Board, and University of Wisconsin staff. Nicolet College's response is the Appendix.

Sincerely,
Dale Cattanach
State Auditor