

11hr_SC-AFHE_sb0375_pt01



(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2011-12

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education...

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

- Mark Weller — Access Wisconsin
- Bill McClenahan — Access Wisconsin

Appearances for Information Only

- Kara Slaughter, Madison — Wisconsin Farmers Union

Registrations For

- Jack O'Meara — UW-Madison, Faculty
- Jennifer Kammerud — DPI
- Kathryn Kuhn — Medical College of Wisconsin
- Rose Smyrski — UW- Platteville
- Pam Galloway — Senator, 29th Senate District
- Pete Christman — UW Medical Foundation
- Lisa Maroney — UW Health
- Dan Rossmiller — WASB
- Paul Merline — WI Hospital Association
- Wendy Wink — Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- Don Nelson — UW-Madison
- Lisa Strand — Wisconsin Library Association
- Deb Sybell — WEAC
- Evan Wynn — Representative, 43rd Assembly District
- Paul Gabriel, Madison — Executive Director, WI Technical College Dist Bds Association
- Jessica Tormey — University of Wisconsin System

Registrations Against

- Celeste Flynn — Time Warner Cable
- Celeste Flynn — Time Warner Cable
- Rebecca Hogan — WMC
- Drew Petersen — TDS
- Tom Moore — WI Cable Communications Association
- Steve Baas — MMAC
- Kent Disch — AT&T

Registrations for Information Only

- None.

January 23, 2012

EXECUTIVE SESSION HELD

Present: (7) Senators Schultz, Harsdorf, Kedzie, Moulton,
Hansen, Shilling and King.

Absent: (0) None.

Excused: (0) None.

Moved by Senator Shilling, seconded by Senator Hansen that **Senate Amendment 1** be recommended for adoption.

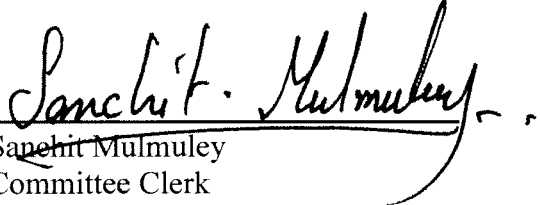
Ayes: (3) Senators Hansen, Shilling and King.
Noes: (4) Senators Schultz, Harsdorf, Kedzie and Moulton.

ADOPTION OF SENATE AMENDMENT 1 NOT RECOMMENDED, Ayes 3, Noes 4

Moved by Senator Moulton, seconded by Senator Shilling that **Senate Bill 375** be recommended for passage.

Ayes: (6) Senators Schultz, Harsdorf, Moulton, Hansen, Shilling and King.
Noes: (1) Senator Kedzie.

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 6, Noes 1


Sanjit Mulmuley
Committee Clerk

Vote Record

Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education

Date: 1/23/12

Moved by: Sen. Shilling Seconded by: Sen. Hansen

AB _____ SB 375 Clearinghouse Rule _____
 AJR _____ SJR _____ Appointment _____
 AR _____ SR _____ Other _____

A/S Amdt 1

A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____

A/S Sub Amdt _____

A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

- Be recommended for:
- Passage Adoption Confirmation Concurrence Indefinite Postponement
 - Introduction Rejection Tabling Nonconcurrence

Committee Member	Aye	No	Absent	Not Voting
Senator Dale Schultz, Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Sheila Harsdorf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Neal Kedzie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Terry Moulton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Dave Hansen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Jennifer Shilling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Jessica King	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Motion Carried Motion Failed

Vote Record

Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education

Date: 1/1

Moved by: Moulton Seconded by: Shilling

AB _____ SB 275 Clearinghouse Rule _____
 AJR _____ SJR _____ Appointment _____
 AR _____ SR _____ Other _____

A/S Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____
 A/S Sub Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

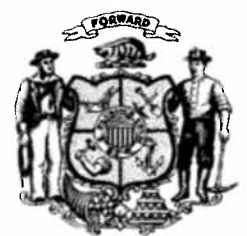
Be recommended for:
 Passage Adoption Confirmation Concurrence Indefinite Postponement
 Introduction Rejection Tabling Nonconcurrence

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Senator Dale Schultz, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Sheila Harsdorf	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Neal Kedzie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Terry Moulton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Dave Hansen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Jennifer Shilling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Jessica King	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Motion Carried Motion Failed



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





MEMORANDUM

TO: | Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education
| (Senators Schultz (Chair), Harsdorf (Vice-Chair), Kedzie, Moulton, Hansen, Shilling and King)

COPY: | Senators Moulton, Galloway, Holperin, T. Cullen, S. Coggs, Schultz, Taylor, Risser, Olsen,
| Vinehout and C. Larson
| Representatives Wynn, Nass, Doyle, Tranel, Bernier, Bies, Spanbauer, Kaufert, C. Taylor,
| Petrowski, Berceau, Marklein, Molepske Jr., Ripp and Danou

FROM: | Kathryn A. Kuhn
| *Vice President, Government and Community Relations*

DATE: | January 18, 2012

RE: | 2011 Senate Bill 375

The Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) supports the provision in 2011 Senate Bill 375 relating to delaying the restrictions on participation by the University of Wisconsin System in selling or providing telecommunications services. As a founding member of WiscNet, MCW opposed the telecommunications changes included in JFC motion #489 during the 2011-2013 Biennial Budget. MCW supports encourages this Committee to postpone the prohibition described in current law 36.585(3)(a) from July 1, 2013 to July 1, 2014.

In 1989 WiscNet was created to provide high speed broad band internet service to UW and was eventually expanded to include other private research institutions such as MCW. It is public/private organization owned, operated, and funded through consortium fees paid by members for the services provided. This collaborative is similar to those throughout the United States which serve to provide high speed internet service to enhance to capabilities of research institutions such as ours.

WiscNet is a successful, longstanding venture that should be highlighted for its collaborative, effective ability to provide high quality service to its members. This public/private organization provides cost efficiency and effectiveness that institutions could not achieve individually and, in so doing, catalyzes research and innovation across all sectors.

Benefits of participating in WiscNet for MCW include:

- Allows researchers, scientists and physicians to transmit large data sets over the internet with safety and efficiency, maximizing their exchange of material pertinent for scientific and clinical discovery.
- Allows MCW to connect to the Internet2 consortium and BOREAS networks, which provides and connects research network services with other state and national research institutions (MCW researchers could lose significant research grants where membership in Internet2 is required).
- Allows MCW to allocate funds to research grants, projects, and personnel that otherwise would be used to fund higher internet provider costs.

- Facilitates collaboration between MCW peer institutions such as UW-Madison, UW-Milwaukee, Marquette University and Milwaukee School of Engineering. This interaction is a critical component of the \$20,000,000 NIH Clinical and Translational Science Grant grant to MCW.
- MCW's membership in WiscNet provides access to low cost data services. Commercial providers would charge more for data services which would mean fewer resources for basic research.
- MCW's research depends on cost-effective, highly reliable, high-speed connectivity to other institutions and consortiums, provided by WiscNet, via Internet2, National Lambda Rail, BOREAS and the Northern Tier Network. This data exchange is required for advanced medical and health research. Commercial providers cannot offer the same level of data support at comparable low costs. Spending more money on data exchange costs reduces the funds available for research.
- Wiscnet has engineered a low latency, un-contended network that operates un-throttled, which ensures the ability to support MCW's demanding research applications and obtain data when research requires it, rather than wait for "low-cost" nights and weekends.

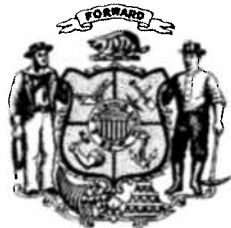
MCW strongly encourages honorable members to allow for the continued use of WiscNet – a public/private collaboration that has provided high speed broad band internet service to research institutions for more than 20 years. WiscNet is an irreplaceable and essential component of ensuring that Wisconsin maintains national-level competitiveness, marketability and innovation transfer of biomedical science for health.

Thank you for considering our comments. For additional information, please contact me at kkuhn@mcw.edu or 414-955-8217.





WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



UWHealth

University of Wisconsin
Medical Foundation

TO: Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education

FROM: Peter H. Christman, EVP & COO of UWMF &
Lisa Maroney, UW Health

DATE: January 19, 2012

RE: Support SB 375

Chairperson Schultz and members of the Committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony in support of Senate Bill 375 which will delay restrictions on the University of Wisconsin System's provision or sale of telecommunication and information technology services. I currently serve as the Chief Operating Officer of the UW Medical Foundation, or "UWMF." UWMF is a clinical arm of UW Health, which also includes the UW's School of Medicine and Public Health and the UW Hospital and Clinics Authority. These three organizations together are UW Health, a national leader in health care, advancing the well-being of the people of Wisconsin and beyond. To that end, UWMF provides clinical sites, technical and professional staff, and administrative services to over 1,200 physicians who conduct research, teach, and provide patient care. UWMF is a not-for-profit entity, existing for the primary purpose of supporting the UW School of Medicine and its faculty.

Legislation adopted last summer and now appearing in Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin Statutes,¹ will prohibit the UW System or any of its departments from providing telecommunications or information technology services. UWMF currently obtains mission critical information technology services – including high speed Internet access and use of the "uwmf.wisc.edu" domain name for e-mail addresses and public websites – from the UW-Madison's Division of Information Technology, or "DoIT." This legislation will force UWMF

¹ Wis Stats. 36.585(3)(a), 2011-2012.

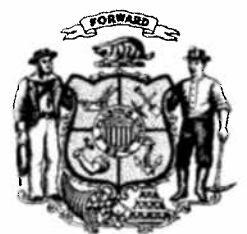
to instead obtain these services from commercial telecommunications providers which will increase operating costs for UWWMF. UWWMF has been receiving high quality, reliable services from DoIT since the beginning of UWWMF in 1996. Any disruption or change to those services is a concern to UWWMF.

Several years ago, we began the challenging but vital migration from paper-based to an electronic medical records system. Efforts to improve that system are still underway, and will continue to evolve over time. For UWWMF this has required the investment of tens of millions of dollars and thousands of hours of staff time, which are large financial and resource burdens to bear for a physician group practice. To be forced to change our wisc.edu domain name space, reconfigure servers associated with that domain name, and re-assign over 3,500 email addresses will prove costly and disruptive, and may limit the resources UWWMF has available to devote to other initiatives, both strategic and regulatory.

Delaying the effective date of the legislation will allow us greater flexibility to examine the impacts of the legislation and plan for any necessary changes to occur smoothly and better plan for avoidance of any significant disruption. We urge you to adopt this bill delaying the legislation's effective date, so everyone involved has adequate time to explore the impact fully, and either revise the legislation or plan for changes as needed. Thank you very much for the opportunity to address the Committee.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education

A Statement from State Superintendent Tony Evers In Support of Senate Bill 375

January 19, 2012

On January 3, 2012, I sent every legislator a memo stating my support for Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) and its companion, Assembly Bill 473. I want to restate my strong support for these bills before this committee and thank Chairperson Schultz for this hearing today.

SB 375 extends the time by which WiscNet, a non-profit membership group, must end its relationship with the UW by one year, to July 1, 2014. This extension is desperately needed. With approximately 70 percent of our school districts and 95 percent of our public libraries getting their Internet access from WiscNet, the DPI is interested in ensuring WiscNet's long-term viability.

Before addressing the need for this specific legislation, I think it is important to provide some background on WiscNet's service. In addition to basic Internet access, WiscNet provides other valuable services to our schools and libraries, including low-cost filtering, collaborative groups, and online education programs. We know of no other Internet provider that offers the online education opportunities provided by WiscNet.

It is very important to note that as a school or library's bandwidth increases, their WiscNet costs remain the same. Other Internet providers increase costs as bandwidth increases. Cost issues are critical as schools and libraries constantly need more bandwidth, but at the same time are under severe budget pressures. In reviewing costs from other providers under the Department of Administration's Internet contract, many charge more than four times what WiscNet charges. Paying four times as much for less service is not in the interest of taxpayers and the communities that schools and libraries serve.

By providing a one-year extension, Senator Moulton and Representative Wynn are giving schools and libraries a lifeline and time to make difficult decisions ahead. Those include:

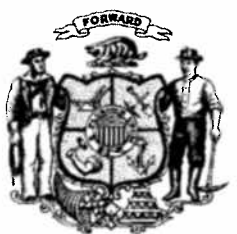
- *Review and possibly implement audit findings.* The Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) is to conduct an audit of UW's relationship with WiscNet by January 1, 2013. This is only six months before the July 1, 2013, date now in the statutes. More than six months will be needed by WiscNet and its 450 members to review the LAB findings and to possibly implement any of the audit's recommendations.

- *Retain school E-rate funding.* The federal E-rate program provides discounts to schools on their Internet and telecommunication costs. The program operates on a July 1-to-June 30 funding year. By moving the date to July 1, 2014, school districts will not jeopardize their federal E-rate dollars. (The E-rate has a lengthy application process and schools will likely need to know by February 2013 who their Internet provider is for the entire July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014 funding year.)
- *Addressing broadband connectivity and Internet access.* From a broader perspective, our state needs a candid and above board discussion on how we can ensure affordable broadband and Internet access to our schools and libraries. This legislation will provide the time needed for such a discussion.

I ask for your support on Senate Bill 375. If you have any questions related to broadband and Internet access in our schools and libraries, please contact Bob Bocher on our staff (266-2127, robert.bocher@dpi.wi.gov).



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





TERRY MOULTON



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

23RD SENATE DISTRICT

Senator Terry Moulton
Testimony on SB 375—WiscNet Sunset Extension
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education
Thursday, January 19, 2012

Chairman, members, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today about Senate Bill 375. I authored this bill with Representative Wynn because I believe a modest extension to the WiscNet sunset is in the best interest of our state.

WiscNet plays a significant role in the district I represent in the Chippewa Valley. It also has an important statewide impact, as WiscNet serves some 450 members, many of which are health and education related.

In this year's budget, there were two provisions regarding WiscNet. The first required that an audit be conducted of WiscNet, to be completed by the Legislative Audit Bureau no later than January 1, 2013. The second prohibited the UW System from taking part in WiscNet as of July 1, 2013, only 6 months after the completion of the audit.

SB 375 extends the required sunset of WiscNet by 1 year.

All parties expect the results of the audit to be highly informative and regardless of the outcome I believe that the legislature should have a longer period of time to read and consider the results of the audit.

Delaying the sunset by just a year will also give the legislature the opportunity to respond to the audit during the Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 sessions once the budget has been completed.

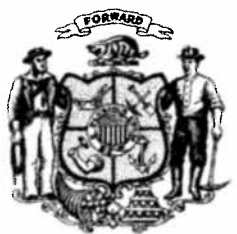
This extension is modest. It provides an opportunity to fully review and implement the audit findings and is a compromise intended to meet the legislature's original intent.

Thank you again, for the opportunity to speak this afternoon. I'd be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Serving the 23rd Senate District



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND HIGHER EDUCATION
(SENATORS SCHULTZ (CHAIR), HARS DORF (VICE-CHAIR), KEDZIE, MOULTON,
HANSEN, SHILLING AND KING)

FROM: TIM SCHELL

SUBJECT: IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 375

DATE: 1/19/2012

CC: SENATORS MOULTON, GALLOWAY, HOLPERIN, T. CULLEN, S. COGGS, SCHULTZ,
TAYLOR, RISSER, OLSEN, VINEHOUT, C. LARSON, ERPENBACH
REPRESENTATIVES WYNN, NASS, DOYLE, TRANEL, BERNIER, BIES, SPANBAUER,
KAUFERT, C. TAYLOR, PETROWSKI, BERCEAU, MARKLEIN, MOLEPSKE JR., RIPP,
DANOU, ROYS, AND POPE-ROBERTS

Thank you, Senator Schultz and members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify in favor of SB 375.

My name is Tim Schell and I am speaking today on behalf of the School Administrators Alliance (SAA) and the Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Association (WEMTA). I am the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Waunakee Community School District, chair of the BadgerNet Advisory Council, and a member of the DPI Digital Learning Advisory Council. My remarks have not been formally endorsed by the district or either advisory council.

Senate Bill 375 will not change the ultimate outcome of the budget provision on the University of Wisconsin and communication technologies, but will allow critical flexibility to protect local taxpayers and the quality of education in our schools through the transition.

Public schools bid out their Internet Access to meet local procurement policies and the requirements of the federal E-Rate program. The overwhelming majority of public school districts in Wisconsin, and many parochial schools as well, have selected WiscNet as their Internet Access provider because it is the cost leader in providing high quality Internet Access. Where other providers, including telephone companies, have been competitive on price, they win the business. These decisions are made on a competitive basis.

Based on pricing sheets and bidding proposals, current WiscNet school customers could see their costs escalate dramatically, even quadrupling, if WiscNet is not an option. At Waunakee, we recently bid out our Internet Access for the 2012-2013 school year. WiscNet was the clear leader with a quote of \$13,500. Another vendor quoted \$54,000. A third vendor offered to bundle a managed service solution among our buildings (not dark fiber) and Internet Access. They were not interested in Internet Access only, and we did not want their managed solution because it limited our site-to-site bandwidth from what we have now. I am sharing our district's information as evidence that forecasts of dramatic cost increases have a factual basis and also to reinforce that districts regularly bid out these services. I also want to note that our district selects telephone companies as service providers when they are the cost leader. TDS is our vendor for telephone service and for our network connections between buildings.

In these tough economic times, districts need flexibility to stretch the education dollar, deliver a quality modern education, and protect their local taxpayers. Extending WiscNet for another year gives districts more time to adjust and adjust in a way that matches up with the biennial budget process.

For school districts, the one year extension is especially important. As mentioned above, school districts procure their telecommunications services, including Internet Access, through the federal e-Rate program. Due to the timelines of the e-Rate program, the decision making process happens early in the calendar year, not at the beginning of the fiscal year. Under the current budget law, school districts would need to make difficult choices on technology costs at the beginning of 2013 when the biennial budget would be under development and school funding levels would be up in the air. Extending WiscNet for another year moves the decision process for schools to the beginning of 2014, when school funding for the next year is known and districts can budget with more certainty.

On a broader note, school districts would welcome more long term visibility in the education funding outlook. The current budget contains no funding language beyond the current biennium and we have no basis for forecasting our 2013-2015 budgets. As a result, districts do not have information for medium and long term budget planning. This makes us very risk averse and opposed to changes with negative fiscal impacts like the budget's WiscNet provisions.

While cost is the primary reason most of your local school districts select WiscNet for Internet Access, it is also worth noting that WiscNet specializes in the education and government market. WiscNet has a strong focus on schools, libraries, and local government and has earned a reputation for tailoring solutions that meet the needs of their niche market. School districts feel they have a voice in WiscNet and that WiscNet positively contributes to education in Wisconsin.

Regardless of whether one is a proponent or opponent of WiscNet, or undecided on the issue, everyone acknowledges that the WiscNet provision was introduced at the 11th hour in the 2011-2013 biennial budget process without much review and requires some adjustment to avoid negative unintended consequences. The budget authorized an audit of WiscNet that is likely to be delivered in early 2013 when the Legislature is focused on the development of the 2013-2015 biennial budget. Senate Bill 375 provides the Legislature a reasonable time to review the audit and remedy any problems in the enacted language.

The extension would also provide the Legislature a reasonable time to review the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Waste, Fraud, and Abuse. The Commission's recommendations endorsed cooperative purchasing initiatives for the economical operation of public services. WiscNet, along with CESA's, is one of Wisconsin's most successful examples of cooperative purchasing of educational services. The extension contained in Senate Bill 375 provides a reasonable time to decide how to meld the budget provisions with the Commission's recommendations.

Now, more than ever, school districts need affordable, high quality Internet Access. The state student information system mandated in the budget will require additional bandwidth. The new state assessment system will be technology based and require additional bandwidth. These are mandates school districts cannot avoid. Most of all, digital learning plays an increasing role in student learning today. Regardless of whether a district is expanding the use of digital instructional materials, implementing a 1-1 initiative, or allowing students to bring their own devices to school for learning, 21st Century learning requires increasing levels of bandwidth. When you look at the list of WiscNet members, you will see several schools that either operate virtual charter schools or are members of the eSchool network. School districts know that change is coming with WiscNet, but we need flexibility to navigate that change to provide quality educational opportunities for our students while protecting our taxpayers.

As the professional association for instructional technology and library media specialists, WEMTA is committed to student success and 21st Century learning. WEMTA partners with WiscNet in providing professional development opportunities for Wisconsin's educators and the two organizations are exploring coordinating their annual meetings. Senate Bill 375 provides additional

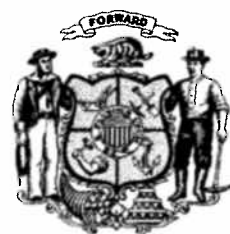
time for WEMTA and WiscNet to adjust their collaboration and continue to provide high quality professional development for teachers and library media specialists.

The modest one year extension contained in Senate Bill 375 provides needed flexibility to protect schools and taxpayers and I encourage you to put students and taxpayers first and support this legislation.

Thank you.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



WISCONSIN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, INC.



To: Chair Schultz, and Members of the Senate Committee
on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education

From: Matthew Stanford, Vice President Policy & Regulatory Affairs
Wisconsin Hospital Association.

Date: January 19, 2011

Re: Support for SB 375 relating to delaying the restrictions on participation by the University of Wisconsin System in selling or providing telecommunications services.

The Wisconsin Hospital Association supports Senate Bill 375 which would provide WiscNet, its members and others additional time to understand and plan for the separation of the University of Wisconsin System from WiscNet under the 2011-2013 Biennial Budget.

WiscNet's membership includes hospitals as well as over 400 other organizations, including the University of Wisconsin System. WiscNet, which is a non-profit cooperative association with its own bylaws and board of directors chosen by its membership, has served its hospital members well by providing high-capacity, affordable broadband internet access in areas of the state where such access was previously unavailable. In areas where some level of broadband is available, it remains cost-prohibitive for a lower quality, reliability and capacity connection.

For hospitals and health care providers, fast and accurate patient diagnosis is critical to providing high quality and safe patient care, especially in medical emergencies. These diagnoses often include the latest in digital scanning and imaging technologies that create large medical image files and require substantial bandwidth to transmit in a timely way.

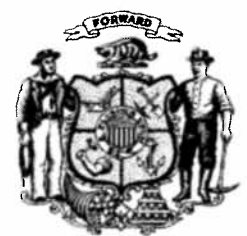
WiscNet provides expanded access to fast, dependable and affordable transmission of these medical images from where they are taken to where they can be diagnosed for areas of the state where before, this transmission – and the improved health care it provides – simply was not available. Thus, hospitals have a substantial interest in ensuring that WiscNet can continue to provide such services into the future.

One critical step in planning for WiscNet's future is the legislative audit of the UW System's relationship with WiscNet required by the Budget Bill. However, it is our understanding that such audit will not be completed until January 1, 2013 – just six months before the date UW System must separate from WiscNet under the Budget Bill. By enacting Senate Bill 375 into law, WiscNet, its members, and others would have a more reasonable time frame to address the audit findings and best plan for a sustainable future for WiscNet and the broadband needs of its members.

Thank you.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





Wisconsin's Research & Education Network

Before the Wisconsin State Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Higher Education

Testimony on SB 375 regarding delaying the restrictions on participation by the University of Wisconsin System in selling or providing telecommunications services.

Testimony by Ross Wilson, January 19, 2012



Senator Schultz and all the leaders on this committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of SB 375. The delay that is built into this legislation is a modest request that we feel allows the public and private sector valuable time to *enact the intent of the budget repair bill language*, which is necessary to move this State forward.

Let me start with an introduction: I am Ross Wilson, Director of Educational Technology at CESA 10 in Chippewa Falls. My job is to cooperatively work with and on behalf of over 30 school districts in the Chippewa Valley and western Wisconsin to save taxpayers money and provide the best educational technology solutions possible to arm young adults to tackle the 21st century jobs and challenges. We operate the largest collection of BagderNet Video Classrooms in the state, serving over 2,500 students annually. Technology allows us to connect kids to resources in the area, around the state, to various universities and technical colleges and information around the world. Working together with these same entities allows all of us to bring down our costs.

Again, allow me to introduce myself: I am Ross Wilson, chair of CINC – the Chippewa Valley InterNetworking Consortium, a community area network in Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls where we cooperatively work together to save taxpayers money in government, libraries and education, and to reduce medical expenses while improving access to health care. In CINC we enhance public safety and medical care by interconnecting hospitals, police, ambulances, and top-notch healthcare workers. We have even created a “safe” environment of “coopetition” among healthcare providers such that consumers get the benefits of “*competition and cooperation*”.

From the onset this network was built with leadership from the UW Eau Claire, AT&T, WINs, the Eau Claire Area School District, the Chippewa Falls School District, CESA 10, Eau Claire County, City of Eau Claire, Mayo Clinic Health System and others. Together we pooled our individual resources to solve our organizational requirements. The result for some was affordable services, and others was the creation of services that did not exist and all organizations saved money for taxpayers and constituents.

And again, please allow me to introduce myself, I am Ross Wilson, chair of the WiscNet board of directors, a non-profit membership cooperative of over 450 members. Please feel free to browse the WiscNet material in your packet. My hope is, you will note the breadth of the WiscNet membership, the magnitude of the organization, and the diversity of the board of



directors. This is a member-owned statewide cooperative that strives to do two things – connect people from all over the state in the research and education arena – and connect the strategies of those member institutions so they can achieve and advance research and educational missions in the 21st century at an affordable price. This is more important than ever before. It is critical for all of us to do more with less, yet make sure we provide 21st century healthcare, public safety, and research opportunities to create new products and jobs, and empower students that have experienced a rich educational environment to take on those new jobs.

I will end my introductions there, (oh yes I have more) but my hope is to give you a sense of how intertwined and complex this community is and a sense of the good things it is doing for Wisconsin.

First, I want to be clear that WiscNet membership is not out to attack, affront, or compete with the telecommunication industry as some may speak to here today. WiscNet is also not the university, although they are a very important member to the entire WiscNet community. What WiscNet strives to do is advance and support the public sector while working with, buying from, or pushing on the private sector to extend advanced communication technologies statewide. Clearly it is a delicate dance, yet the balance between the public and private sector is what makes WiscNet so unique.

Let me try to explain that with an example. History can be an important teacher, so let me offer a real world success story.

It is hard to believe, but we didn't always have the vibrant economic engine that is the Internet. As you know, it is a relatively young phenomenon that started in the university research and education community. The UW along with their technical college and private university partners had the vision and the know how to launch "the Wisconsin Internet" but they lacked the bridge and the mission to bring it to the rest of the state. Their brilliant solution was to create WiscNet. WiscNet was formed to extend the Internet from the university to all of Wisconsin. And WiscNet was also created because the university knew it could not provide the service. I used to tell my daughter when she started poking into her other sister's business, that being Jenny is a big job – worry about Jenny. Well the university knew that being a university is a big job, and they needed to worry about running the university and not WiscNet. Smart people.



WiscNet extended the Internet to the public sector and made sure that private sector consultants learned the Internet too. We taught, then watched, and got out of the way as it propagated to the telephone and cable companies as a service and business opportunity. The WiscNet community, with the UW at its soul, quietly created or catalyzed numerous jobs and new businesses with the telephone business and more importantly, beyond.

It is easy today to see that the Internet has made life better for us, keeps us informed, has made organizations more efficient, and allowed new and old businesses to prosper. Yet, ironically, not everyone was happy back when we started out in those early days, and many of the same naysayers complained of WiscNet and university involvement. Thankfully we had leadership that allowed all of us time. Time to hold the course. Time to understand the technology. Time to understand the role the private sector, public sector, and universities need to play. Time to let investments grow. Time to propagate knowledge. Time to watch new and old businesses grow. Those early leaders held the course for us. They understood the criticality of the universities. They allowed the internet to come to Wisconsin.

Success story complete, but we – Wisconsin – are not done. We cannot stop here. So often we get caught up in definitions of internet, broadband, megabits, kilobits, bytes ... they make your head spin. Sadly they also don't matter. As we argue about who has what, at what speed, at which locations, customers, would be customers, and various businesses say they need more. We argue. They need more. They are right and we are holding them back.

What is the next internet? The next internet is about connected communities of interest with unheard of network access. Infinite access. Or at least, access levels that you never hit the top, because when you hit the top, you are being held back. We cannot hold people back. Think of a network with access, like electricity, where you don't call up and beg for more. It is possible. It will result in thriving schools, public services will increase at reduced costs, health access increases while costs drop, businesses expand and new businesses appear that we cannot imagine – just like what happened with the Internet. And again WiscNet, extending the research networking that universities create, will strive to connect the public sector. We want to continue to work with the private sector so those companies prosper as we extend these almost unthinkable services to all of Wisconsin.

Seems a little pie in the sky I bet. Yet I am sure many – including many in this room – didn't think this Internet thing would be as important as is today.



Wisconsin's Research & Education Network

My hope is with this very real picture I have painted allows some understanding of the important and complex synergy that WiscNet, the universities, the private sector, the public sector and communities throughout Wisconsin share. We are not competitors. We are a co-dependent ecosystem. We need this time, to make sure we continue to do good, important things for Wisconsin, to work through and continue to keep our friends at the UW within the law, to continue to have all of the Research and Education community working collaboratively, and to continue to connect people and connect strategies, along with the private telecommunications companies. These are challenging times and we need time to meet the challenge. We – the public and private sector – need this time, even as some argue against it.

I know I have only scratched the surface on this special ecosystem we have and we cannot afford to lose it in the heat of complex budget debates. It may be irreplaceable or the time to replace it may be unacceptable. So please, like the leadership that kept this state on course when we all built the Internet, we need time, this extended time we are asking for, from you our leaders, so we can stay the course like we - Wisconsin did way back when.

Thank you once again and let me introduce my friend, David Lois, Executive Director of WiscNet and between the two of us we would be happy to answer any questions you may have.