

August 20, 2024

Ms Amy Blumenfeld Bogost
Chair
University of Wisconsin Board of Regents
Office of the Board of Regents
1860 Van His Hall
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, Wisconsin



Dear Ms Blumenfeld Bogost:

It has come to my attention that the UW Board of Regents will be considering at its August 22-23, 2024 meeting a budget item related to a \$293 million dollar plan for building more UW-Madison owned student housing in Madison.

I write today - not to encourage a “yes” or a “no” vote on this proposal, but to urge you and your colleagues to delay consideration of the issue until you can base your decision on a more comprehensive understanding of the student housing market than has been provided to you or anyone else to date.

It is my understanding that the Division of University Housing at UW-Madison (UW-owned Housing) and Downtown Madison, Inc. along with others, paid for a student survey which obtained some 500+ responses and that the UW-owned Housing has issued conclusions about the student housing market based on those responses.

I have spoken with numerous people knowledgeable about housing in general and student housing in particular. They have serious concerns - not about the survey instrument, but about the restrictive nature of the population being surveyed and the assertions being made by UW-owned Housing in support of their proposal based upon data that has not yet been released to the public.

These individuals understand and appreciate the need to responsibly ensure students attending institutions of higher learning have access to safe, nurturing, appropriately located, and affordable housing. They also understand the complexity of the marketplace and are persuaded that student housing decisions which affect the broader community should only be made with a full understanding of the potential impact on that community. To that end, they have committed to commissioning a more comprehensive and methodologically sound student housing market study that will be ready before the end of the year. The study will include a broader set of data inputs including the impact of the additional units already planned and projected changes in

demographic trends. It will also examine the assertions made thus far by UW-owned Housing (e.g., No taxpayer funds will be used to build the proposed housing.)

Given this set of circumstances, I ask that your fellow Regents delay consideration of the UW-owned Housing proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victoria LaBrosse".

Victoria LaBrosse
Executive Director
Apartment Association of South Central WI
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victoria@aascw.org

