



Franciscan Healthcare - La Crosse
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April 21st, 2023

Dear members of the Joint Finance Committee,

On behalf of Mayo Clinic Health System, I write in support of funding for the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Prairie Springs Science Center Completion and Cowley Hall Demolition Project. Our region remains grateful for the state's Phase I investment in the science center. The resulting facility has been transforming health and science education since it opened in 2018.

Mayo Clinic Health System employs more than 8,000 people in Wisconsin. With a tight labor market, we have been challenged to recruit staff for important patient care roles, and we anticipate a growing shortage of health care workers across the state over the next decade. Providing high-quality patient care requires an adequate supply of well-trained staff. TO support health care education and further heal care knowledge, we entered into a research agreement with UW-La Crosse in November of 2019. This unique partnership brings UW-La Crosse students and faculty together with Mayo professionals to conduct research. The partnership was inspired by the Prairie Springs Science Center and the completion of this project is vital to realizing its full potential.

The Prairie Springs Science Center Completion will replace the aging Cowley Hall, a 55-year-old structure that cannot be renovated to accommodate the collaborative, student-centered and technology-rich environment necessary for scientific study today. Completion of the science center will allow for program growth and greater collaboration through expanded lab and research facilities.

A fully completed Prairie Springs Science Center will create lasting benefits for our region and the state, through the students and faculty it will attract, the education and research it will house and the graduates who will go on to provide much-needed talent for Wisconsin employers like Mayo Clinic Health System.

For these reasons, I ask that you give the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Prairie Springs Science Center Completion and Cowley Hall Demolition Project your highest priority in the upcoming budget process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Mueller".

Paul Mueller, M.D.
Regional Vice President SWWI-MCHS-Franciscan Healthcare