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STATEMENT FROM SENATOR MARY E. PANZER ON SENATE BUDGET REDUCTIONS

The Wisconsin State Senate took action today to eliminate the Budget and Policy staffs for each political party. We must show by example that it is possible to develop methods for accomplishing our mission with fewer resources during this time of fiscal crisis. The elimination of the 12 positions has a fiscal impact of approximately \$725,000 in annual savings.

The State Senate will continue to analyze budget and policy items by using staff assigned to committee chairs and ranking minority members. A staff position is being provided specifically to the Co-Chairperson and ranking minority member of the Joint Committee on Finance to provide information on fiscal matters. In addition, certain technical support activity provided by the Budget and Policy staff units will become a responsibility of the Office of the Chief Clerk. The Chief Clerk will fill 3 existing vacancies to provide this support. This action provides for greater accountability of staff activities.

The Senate has also taken action to reduce Senate office budgets for every Senator by \$15,660. This is equivalent to the cost of one district-wide mailing. Virtually all committee travel will be suspended through June, for additional savings of approximately \$10,000.