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## **WIU slated to receive \$42.5 million more for Q-C campus**

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**By Kevin Lee, Sng2@springnet1.com**

SPRINGFIELD -- Western Illinois University is slated to get approximately \$42.5 million in state funding to construct a new campus in Moline.

That is in addition to the \$16.4 million WIU received in the spending portion of the statewide construction plan passed last week.

The new funding appears in a bill that will likely come before lawmakers today, according to state Sen. Mike Jacobs, D-East Moline.

"This is a bill that came together with the help of Gov. Pat Quinn as well as Senate President John Cullerton and House Speaker Mike Madigan," Jacobs said. "I have to tip my hat to them."

State Rep. Pat Verschoore, D-Milan, said he talked to Madigan about WIU's need for additional funding.

"Not only are we going to have a four-year university in our area, we're also going to get all sorts of jobs in the area -- construction and high-end professorial jobs," he said.

Jacobs said the new university would spur upwards of an estimated \$100 million in private economic development in the surrounding area.

"This will change the face of the Quad-Cities," he said. "There's a whole open space -- there are no bookstores, there are no restaurants yet. That's where we'll really see the investment."

Both he and Verschoore said they expect lawmakers and the governor will approve the bill.

The addition funding gives WIU about \$59 million for a three-building campus in Moline. That's still short of the estimated \$80 million needed to complete construction plans.

The Quad-Cities has waited for years for a new WIU campus. But political squabbles and the lack of state funding and political squabbles meant that WIU has completed just the design and planning phases.

"I thought we could get more funding, but I didn't think we would raise the funding that quickly," Jacobs said. "You don't often see start-up universities getting this type of funding success in such a short time."