

State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

212 East Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor
Post Office Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984
Voice (608) 266-8005
Fax (608) 267-0500
E-mail: gab@wisconsin.gov
<http://gab.wi.gov>



JUDGE GERALD C. NICHOL
Chairperson

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

MEMORANDUM

DATE: For the April 29, 2015 Meeting

TO: Members, Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

FROM: Kevin J. Kennedy, Director and General Counsel
Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

Prepared by: Reid Magney, Public Information Officer

SUBJECT: Voter ID Implementation - Public Education Campaign

A key component of implementing the Voter Photo ID Law is a public education and outreach campaign. At the time of its passage, 2011 Wisconsin Act 23 contained language directing the Government Accountability Board to carry out a campaign in 2012. Board staff worked with the KW2 advertising agency in Madison to develop the "Bring It to the Ballot" multimedia campaign, consisting of TV and radio public service announcements, a website, an automated toll-free helpline, a texting program, posters, brochures and other voter outreach materials. The campaign launched in January of 2012 for the February Spring Primary, but was mothballed in March of that year following court decisions enjoining the Board from enforcing the law. In September and October of 2014, parts of the campaign were updated and it was briefly re-launched before the U.S. Supreme Court enjoined enforcement prior to the November 2014 General Election.

On March 23, 2015, the Supreme Court lifted its injunction, but the Wisconsin Attorney General advised not to enforce the law for the April 7 Spring Election. On April 8, staff reactivated the campaign website (<http://bringit.wisconsin.gov>) and began updating it and the G.A.B.'s main website with current voter photo ID information.

Over the last several weeks, staff has been reviewing the campaign and has met with KW2 representatives to plan for 2016 elections. We have identified a number of elements that need to be updated to remove references to the year 2012 and to emphasize the Division of Motor Vehicles' program to help people without birth certificates get state ID cards for voting purposes.

Whether or not the Legislature provides funding to re-launch the campaign, staff believes it is important to make important updates to the media and materials so they can be used in 2016 and beyond. With Board authorization, KW2 can make the following updates relatively quickly with available funds during the current fiscal year.

Activity	Estimated Cost
Material Review and Planning	\$2,000
Update informational Videos	\$10,000
Update Television and Radio PSAs	\$7,000
Update Brochure	\$2,600
Update PSAs	\$2,000
Update BringIt.wi.gov Website	\$11,020
Total	\$34,620

G.A.B. staff will share the updated electronic files with local election officials and community groups who may wish to pay to print brochures and posters, or who can air PSAs on local cable access channels and community radio stations. The staff can also make PSAs available to broadcasters who wish to air them.

The G.A.B. staff does not believe that voluntary efforts and free media will be adequate to the task of getting the word out to voters about the need to show an acceptable photo ID to receive their ballot in all future elections, especially during a presidential election year. Staff is also concerned that without a robust public information campaign, certain elderly voters who are exempt from the requirement will believe they need to have a current photo ID. In 2011 and 2012 staff heard numerous stories about families who experienced unnecessary inconvenience and hardship in taking elderly relatives to the DMV because they did not understand the exemption for voters who are indefinitely confined due to age, illness, disability or infirmity. Additionally, the DMV's new procedure to help people without birth certificates get a free state ID for voting is not well known.

Re-launching the Bring It to the Ballot campaign in 2016 will be a significant expense which is not currently included in the agency's proposed FY 2015-2017 budget. Staff has alerted members of the Joint Committee on Finance that the Board will be seeking funding for public education. It will be a policy and fiscal decision for the Legislature to determine at what level the campaign should be funded.

The staff is still working with KW2 to develop detailed estimates and plans for a cost-effective, multi-media public education campaign. Based on initial work, we believe the cost will be at least \$300,000 and could be as much as \$500,000. This compares to the Board's original budget of approximately \$430,000 for all of 2012.

The staff will present a specific campaign budget request to the Board for its approval at the June 2015 meeting. In the meantime, staff requests that the Board provide direction regarding work necessary to update existing Bring it to the Ballot resources and materials.

Recommended Motion

Authorize staff to use existing budgetary resources to update the voter photo ID public education and outreach campaign media and materials as outlined in the memorandum.