

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

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JUDGE GERALD C. NICHOL
Chairperson

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 23, 2015

TO: Wisconsin County Clerks
Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
City of Milwaukee Election Commission
Milwaukee County Election Commission

FROM: Michael Haas
Elections Division Administrator

SUBJECT: Voter Photo ID Requirement Not in Effect for April Spring Election
Voter Photo ID Guidance 2015-2

Wisconsin voters will not be required to show a photo ID to vote at the April 7, 2015 Spring Election.

As you may know, this morning the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for enforcement of Wisconsin's 2011 voter ID law, but because the Spring Election is two weeks away, the Attorney General has advised state election officials not to implement it at the April 7 election. The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) represented the Government Accountability Board in defending the voter ID law.

The Government Accountability Board had been conferring with the DOJ regarding the possibility that the Supreme Court might decline to accept the cases challenging the photo ID requirement prior to the Spring Election. The G.A.B. agrees with the DOJ that the photo ID requirement cannot be implemented for the April 7 election, both because absentee ballots have already been issued and because of the challenge of communicating the requirements of the law to local election officials, election inspectors and voters so soon before the election.

Municipal clerks and election inspectors may not request or require that voters present a photo ID as a condition of obtaining a ballot, either while voting absentee or at the polling place.

The G.A.B. anticipates there will be special elections in 2015 at which photo ID will be required, and we will be reaching out specifically to local election officials in those jurisdictions regarding implementation of the photo ID requirement for those special elections. The next statewide election at which photo ID will be required is the Spring Primary on February 16, 2016. If you will have a special election prior to the 2016 Spring Primary, please remember to notify us so that we can assist with issues related to photo ID as well as SVRS tasks.

If you have any questions, please contact the G.A.B. Help Desk at gabhelpdesk@wi.gov or (608) 261-2028. Thank you.