

# State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

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**DATE:** June 3, 2010

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

**FROM:** Nathaniel E. Robinson  
Elections Division Administrator  
Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

**SUBJECT:** Important Information for Municipal and County Clerks  
The Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act

I am writing to update you on what we are doing to implement the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act that is commonly referred to simply as MOVE. MOVE is an amendment to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and was designed to address a number of problems experienced by overseas absentee voting. Key among those problems is that military and overseas voters are disenfranchised by lengthy mailing delays. The MOVE Act requires state and local election officials to take a number of steps to address these problems.

## Background

The MOVE Act was originally introduced by Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) on July 8, 2009, in response to recent studies which showed that military and overseas voters were experiencing significant challenges voting from overseas ranging from never receiving a ballot to having their ballots rejected at the polling place for arriving after the applicable deadline. The bill quickly gained momentum and passed both houses of Congress. It was signed by the President on October 28, 2009. The law is scheduled to be effective beginning with the November 2010 General Election.

## Summary of Federal Requirements

The MOVE Act requires a number of significant changes be implemented by both state and local election officials to better accommodate UOCAVA voters, including (but not limited to):

### Summary of State Requirements from MOVE Act

1. Develop procedures governing electronic transmission of voter registration applications, applications for absentee ballot and official absentee ballots.
2. Develop a method by which a military or overseas elector may state their preference to receive voting materials by electronic means.
3. Include electronic contact information on all uniform instructions for absentee ballots to be sent by local election officials to military and overseas electors.
4. Develop a free access system, in coordination with local election officials, for military and overseas electors to determine that their ballot was received by local election officials.

### Summary of Local Requirements from MOVE Act

1. Send voter registration applications, applications for absentee ballot and official absentee ballots by mail or electronic means as indicated by the elector.
2. Include electronic contact information on all instructional absentee ballot materials sent to military and overseas electors.
3. Send official absentee ballots to military and overseas electors no later than 45 days before an election for Federal Office.
4. Provide data regarding the receipt of military or overseas ballots to enable military and overseas voters to confirm the receipt of their ballot via the State's Voter Public Access (VPA) system.
5. Accept the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) for all elections for federal office. (Not effective until December 31, 2010).
6. Provide statistical data on the numbers of absentee ballots transmitted to and received from military and overseas electors.

### How Wisconsin Plans to Implement Requirements the MOVE Act

We need your help! We need all municipal and county clerks' help in order to effectively and successfully implement MOVE in Wisconsin. We need your help in ensuring that Wisconsin's military and overseas voters will receive, mark and return their absentee ballots in enough time for those ballots to be counted. In its simplest form, that is what MOVE is all about.

In order to comply with the MOVE Act for the November 2010 General Election, local election officials are being asked to make changes to both the business processes and the technology used to track absentee ballots. G.A.B. plans to ensure MOVE Act compliance in the following ways:

1. The VPA website will serve as the State's free access system where voters can track the status of their absentee ballots.
2. All military and overseas absentee ballots will need to be tracked in the SVRS System in order to appear on VPA. This allows for consistency across jurisdictions and offers seamless service to our military and overseas absentee voters.
3. SVRS Absentee functionality will be revamped to make it easier to use and more straight-forward. The absentee screens will be simplified. The process will be made less complicated and have fewer steps. In addition, SVRS will be improved to allow for the tracking of state write-in ballots in addition to official absentee ballots.

We will be meeting with County Clerks at their Association meeting later this month to discuss their role in assisting with MOVE implementation. We anticipate a final decision on our MOVE implementation plan will be made by July 1, 2010, at which time, additional information will be forthcoming.

If you have questions, please contact David Buerger, our Lead Elections Specialist for MOVE at [David.Buerger@wi.gov](mailto:David.Buerger@wi.gov), or at (608) 267-0951. Thank you.

cc: Kevin J. Kennedy  
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