

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

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JUDGE THOMAS H. BARLAND
Chairperson

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

DATE: May 26, 2011

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

FROM: Nathaniel E Robinson
Elections Division Administrator
Government Accountability Board

SUBJECT: State's New Voter Photo ID Bill

Governor Walker signed the Voter Photo ID Bill into law on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. This law requires significant changes to long-established election administration practices and procedures. The purpose of this communication is to inform you that working in close collaboration with you, the Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) staff is preparing to ensure a smooth, efficient and effective implementation of this new law, starting with the planned July 12, 2011, recall election.

The G.A.B. is charged with a graduated implementation of this law over the next 15 months with the first changes going into effect on the day following publication of the law in time for the tentatively planned July 12, 2011 recall elections. A major provision of the new law (presenting a Statutory ID in order to receive a ballot) will not be required until the February 2012 spring primary election. The legislation however, calls for a "soft implementation" of the photo ID concept by requiring poll workers to request photo ID for any elections held in 2011 and provide an informational hand-out to voters who do not have the required identification. Final provisions relating to eliminating the straight party voting option will not go into effective until November 2012.

As you may be aware, since April 2011, our agency has focused primarily on providing information on Photo ID and other election reform bills that were and still are being considered by the Legislature; providing information on recall efforts; and, overseeing the recent statewide recount for the Supreme Court contest. In-between, we administered the April 5 Spring Election and the May 3 Special Election for Assembly Districts 60, 83 and 94, caused by the resignations of Mark Gottlieb, Scott L. Gunderson and Michael D. Huebsch, respectively. We are now beginning to turn our full attention to developing plans for implementing Photo ID.

A lot has to be fleshed out and decided between now and when the tentatively planned July 12, 2011 recall elections are held, including but not at all limited to the following:

- Absentee Voting Implementation Strategies
- Clerk Education, Training and Technical Assistance
- Effects of the Elimination of the Corroborator
- Effects of the New Late Registration Cut-off Date
- Poll Lists Changes (Revised lists to provide for voter signature)
- Polling Place Voter Education (Will additional Poll Lists and Poll Workers be needed)
- Soft implementation for photo ID for elections held in 2011

- Upgrades that will have to be engineered into the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS)
- The New 28 Consecutive Day Residency Requirement
- Voter Education, Information and Outreach Initiatives

Although time is very tight between now and the tentatively planned July 12, 2011 recall elections, we will work closely with municipal and county clerks to make sure we (G.A.B., clerks and the voting public) are prepared to meet these new challenges and opportunities. As always, we appreciate your suggestions, feedback and your usual cooperation.

You will be hearing from us. Thank you.

cc: Kevin J. Kennedy
Director and General Counsel
Government Accountability Board