

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

212 E. Washington Ave., Third Floor • Madison, WI 53703 • gab@wi.gov • (608) 266-8005 • Help Desk (608) 261-2028 • <http://gab.wi.gov>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 17, 2011

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Reid Magney, 608-267-7887

First Election with Voter Photo ID is Tuesday

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board reminds voters that when they go to the polls on Tuesday, things will be different – they will need to show their photo ID to receive a ballot.

“Voter photo ID is the biggest change to Wisconsin elections since 18-year-olds became eligible to vote in the early 1970s,” said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “But voters can avoid problems if they take a few steps to prepare.”

“Most Wisconsin residents already have the ID they need to vote,” Kennedy said. “But if they do not have one of the nine acceptable forms of photo ID, they can get a free state ID card at their local DMV office.” (See the list of acceptable IDs below.)

In addition to bringing their driver license, state issued ID card or other acceptable photo ID to the polling place, voters need to remember simply to “State It, Show It, Sign It.”

“State It” means stating their name and address to the poll workers, Kennedy said. “This is something Wisconsin voters have always needed to do to vote. It doesn’t matter if the poll workers know you.”

“Show It” means show your photo ID card. Poll workers will check to make sure you are who you say you are, and that your photo ID is valid for voting, Kennedy said. “The address on your ID does not have to be current, and your name does not have to match your name on the poll list exactly. Your ID is acceptable even if it expired after November 2010,” he said.

“Sign It” means signing the poll book – another new requirement this year. “Having you sign the poll book helps ensure your voter participation records are accurate, and will also provide evidence in case of suspected voter fraud,” Kennedy said.

Tuesday’s Spring Primary Election will be relatively small, with voters in approximately 520 of Wisconsin’s 1,850 cities, villages and towns going to the polls. These primary elections typically have turnouts of less than 10 percent of eligible voters. As a result, the G.A.B. does not anticipate major problems with implementation of the new law at this election.

“We learned a great deal during soft implementation of the Voter Photo ID Law last summer and fall,” said Nathaniel E. Robinson, elections division administrator for the G.A.B. In those elections, voters were asked for an ID, but were not required to show one. “We have been training local election officials about the changes in the law, and we have been educating and doing outreach to voters across the state.”

In January, the G.A.B. launched its “Bring It to the Ballot” campaign of public service announcements on TV, radio, newspapers, billboards and the Internet. All of the videos and other materials are available on

the campaign's website: <http://bringit.wisconsin.gov>. Those who do not have Internet access can call a toll-free number 1-866-VOTE-WIS (1-866-868-3947) for information.

The website contains links to a list of DMV locations and information about important exceptions in the law, which are not widely understood, for some absentee voters who are indefinitely confined for health reasons or who vote by mail on a consistent basis.

These photo IDs are acceptable for voting purposes, and can be unexpired or expired after the date of the most recent general election (currently, the November 2, 2010 election):

- A Wisconsin DOT-issued driver license, even if driving privileges are revoked or suspended
- A Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card
- A Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card or driver license without a photo issued under the religious exemption
- Military ID card issued by a U.S. uniformed service
- A U.S. passport book or card.

These photo IDs are also acceptable for voting purposes, but must be unexpired:

- A certificate of naturalization that was issued not earlier than two years before the date of an election at which it is presented
- A driving receipt issued by Wisconsin DOT (valid for 45 days)
- An identification card receipt issued by Wisconsin DOT (valid for 45 days)
- An identification card issued by a federally recognized Indian tribe in Wisconsin
- A photo identification card issued by a Wisconsin accredited university, college or technical college that contains date of issuance, signature of student, and an expiration date no later than two years after date of issuance. **Also, the university or college ID must be accompanied by a separate document that proves enrollment.**
- A citation or notice of intent to revoke or suspend a Wisconsin DOT-issued driver license that is dated within 60 days of the date of the election.

Voters who do not have one of these acceptable photo IDs can cast a provisional ballot on Election Day. However, for that vote to be counted, a provisional voter must bring back an acceptable photo ID – to either the polling place by 8 p.m. on Election Day, or the municipal clerk's office by 4 p.m. the Friday after the election.

###

The Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) is responsible for administration and enforcement of campaign finance, elections, ethics and lobbying laws in Wisconsin. The G.A.B. is made up of six non-partisan, former judges and is supported by an agency of non-partisan staff members.