

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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### Statement on Recall Petition Falsification

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board issued the following statement by Director and General Counsel Kevin Kennedy regarding reports that a group called Mines for Wisconsin is advising recall opponents to sign the name “Adolf Hitler” on petitions as a protest:

It is against the law to intentionally falsify a name on a recall petition. If the fliers encouraging people to falsify signatures are genuine, this group may be breaking the law, as would anyone who acts on this blatant attempt to undermine the integrity of the electoral process.

The Government Accountability Board has referred this matter to the Milwaukee County District Attorney’s office for investigation.

It is a violation of Wisconsin Statutes 12.13(3)(a) to “Falsify any information in respect to or fraudulently deface or destroy a ... recall petition ...” Violation is a Class I felony, punishable by up to 3½ years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.

Illegal petition signatures will not be counted by the Government Accountability Board. We will not tolerate signature fraud by anyone – petition supporters or opponents.

Much has been made in the media about the Government Accountability Board’s role in recall petition review, and whether the Board should undertake a much more costly investigation of each signature. The Board will do its part as required by state law, but the procedures laid out in the statutes give recall committees and the incumbent officeholder’s committee important roles to play – eliminating fraudulent and duplicate signatures before filing, and challenging signatures after filing. The Board will then rule on those challenges. Political committees may raise unlimited funds to circulate and challenge recall petitions. By placing the burden on officeholders to identify questionable signatures, the Legislature has determined that the cost should be shared by the politicians rather than shouldered only by the taxpayers.

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The Government Accountability Board is responsible for administration and enforcement of campaign finance, elections, ethics and lobbying laws in Wisconsin. The board is made up of six non-partisan, former judges and is supported by an agency of non-partisan staff members. Additional information about the mission of the Government Accountability Board is available by telephone at **608-266-8005**, by electronic mail at **[gab@wi.gov](mailto:gab@wi.gov)**, or through the Internet at **<http://gab.wi.gov>**.