

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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Turnout Estimated at 20 percent for April 2 Election

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board is predicting voter turnout of 20 percent for the Spring Election on Tuesday, April 2.

Wisconsin’s voters will choose among 9,587 candidates for 6,768 state and local offices, as well vote in 76 different local referenda.

“While there is much focus on the statewide elections for Supreme Court Justice and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Spring Elections are the people’s chance to have their say about local government and schools,” said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “These local officials and referenda can have an effect on people’s taxes and the quality of life.”

Local races include elections for 29 circuit court judges as well as 43 mayors, 375 village presidents, and 1,182 town board chairpersons. There are 614 school board seats up for election and 52 school district referenda. Other local referenda range from advisory questions about Election Day Registration in Dane County and the City of Milwaukee to issues about selling town property and allowing all-terrain vehicles on town roads. There are also “Move to Amend” advisory referenda in the cities of Fort Atkinson and Whitewater and in Chippewa County about whether the U.S. Constitution should be amended regarding rights for corporations.

Voters in Assembly District 98 in Waukesha County will also have special partisan election to fill a vacant seat. There is only one candidate on the ballot.

To find out which candidates and referendums they will see on the ballot, voters should visit the MyVote Wisconsin website: <http://myvote.wi.gov>. Registered voters can put in their name and date of birth to see their record and what is on their ballot. Voters planning to register at the polls on Election Day can use the Address Search feature to find their polling place and see sample ballots for their city, village or town. A complete list of races, candidates and referendums is also available as an attachment to this news release on the G.A.B. website: <http://gab.wi.gov/node/2799>.

Elections Division Administrator Michael Haas reminded voters who plan to register on Election Day to bring an acceptable proof of residence document with them. “You can use a current and valid Wisconsin driver license or identification card that has your current address,” Haas said. “But there are many other kinds of documents that work as well, including property tax bills,

utility bills, bank statements and paychecks.” A full list of acceptable documents is available here: <http://gab.wi.gov/publications/voter-guides/proof-of-residence>.

In-person absentee voting – also known as early voting – in the clerk’s office ends at 5 p.m. or the close of business on Friday, March 29. Absentee ballots cast by mail must be postmarked by Election Day and received in the clerk’s office by Friday, April 5 to be counted. The deadline to request an absentee ballot by mail was 5 p.m. Thursday, March 28.

Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. on Election Day. Haas reminded voters and clerks that the G.A.B. will be open for extended hours for the election. On Friday, March 29 and Monday, April 1, the agency will be open until 6 p.m., and on Election Day from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Voters can call 1-866-VOTE-WIS (866-868-3947) or 608-261-2028.

Commenting on the turnout projection, Kennedy said: “With the exception of 2011, turnout for Spring Elections with contested Wisconsin Supreme Court races has ranged from 18.2 percent to 20.9 percent of eligible voters over the last decade. We expect this year’s turnout to be in that range.”

In comparison, turnout in April 2011 at the height of the Capitol protests was 34.3 percent. Turnout at the November 2012 Presidential Election was 70.1 percent.

Wisconsin has an estimated voting-age population of 4,378,741 adults. Voter turnout and current voter registration statistics are available at <http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/statistics>.

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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.