

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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G.A.B. Releases Final Report on Election Day Registration

MADISON, WI – Eliminating Election Day voter registration in Wisconsin would cost taxpayers between \$13.1 million and \$14.5 million, according to a staff report released today by the Government Accountability Board.

The Final Report on the Impacts and Costs of Eliminating Election Day Registration in Wisconsin is being released well in advance of the G.A.B.'s next meeting on March 20 to give the public and legislature ample time to read it before the Board considers it, said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel.

In December 2012, the G.A.B. released a preliminary staff report which included only the costs to the agency, estimated then at \$5,193,796. The Board took no action on the preliminary report. Since then, staff has revised the G.A.B. estimate downward to \$3,961,696. The reduced estimate reflects a different approach to maintaining and updating information in the voter registration database, which the G.A.B. developed after the preliminary report was released.

For the final report, four other state departments (Transportation, Health Services, Children and Families, and Workforce Development) have submitted their best estimates of how much it would cost if they were required to offer voter registration services to their customers under the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). The combined cost estimates are between \$9,194,502 and \$10,548,732.

Wisconsin is exempt from the NVRA because of its Election Day Registration (EDR) system. If EDR is eliminated, federal law would require Wisconsin to establish a system for offering voter registration services at the Division of Motor Vehicles and at agencies which provide public assistance or administer programs that assist persons with disabilities. Employees of those partner agencies would need to transmit voter registration applications and other voter data to the appropriate election officials.

The G.A.B. prepared its report on eliminating EDR in response to requests for information from the Legislature.

The full report is available on the agency website: <http://gab.wi.gov/publications/reports/final-edr-report>.

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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.