

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:
March 30, 2012

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

Recall Petition Update 12: G.A.B. Orders Recall Elections

Madison, WI – The Government Accountability Board voted 5-0 today to order recall elections for Governor Walker, Lt. Gov. Kleefisch and four State Senators. The elections were ordered for May 8, and if that becomes a primary election, the general election date will be June 5.

Meeting in the Wisconsin Capitol, the Board found that recall petitions for the Governor and Lt. Governor contained significantly more than the 540,208 valid signatures required to trigger a recall. On March 12, the Board made similar determinations regarding the recall petitions for the four State Senators (Scott Fitzgerald, SD 13, Van Wanggaard, SD 21, Terry Moulton, SD 23, and Pam Galloway, SD 29), but delayed final action until today so all the recall elections could be scheduled on the same days.

Below is a summary of the staff’s findings adopted by the Board. A more detailed breakdown of the numbers is contained in the reports, available here:

<http://gab.wi.gov/about/meetings/2012/march-30-special>.

Officeholder	Signatures Submitted	Signatures Struck by Staff	Duplicates Struck	Valid Signatures
Gov. Walker	931,053	26,113	4,001	900,939
Lt. Gov. Kleefisch	842,854	29,601	4,263	808,990

Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B., thanked the Board’s staff for all their hard work over the last several months spent preparing for the task of reviewing more than 1.8 million signatures on more than 300,000 petition pages.

“This is not a task we asked for or relished,” Kennedy said. “But now that these officials have been recalled to stand for election again, it will be up to the people of Wisconsin to settle this political dispute at the ballot box.”

Under state law, the incumbent officeholder’s name is automatically on the ballot unless he or she resigns within 10 days of the election being ordered. One of the four State Senators, Pam Galloway, has already resigned for personal reasons not related to the recall, and her vacant seat will be filled in this recall election.

Candidates who want to run in the recall election may now circulate nomination petitions, which are due to the G.A.B. by 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 10. State Senate candidates need a minimum of 400 signatures and Governor and Lt. Governor candidates need a minimum of 2,000 signatures.

A number of candidates have already filed campaign finance registrations for the recall elections, the first step in running for office. Those registration statements are available in the Campaign Finance Information System: <http://cfis.wi.gov>. Choose “View Registrants” from the main menu, select “5/08/12 Special Election” under Election Date and click Search for the list of names.

The time period for incumbents to raise unlimited funds to respond to the recall petitions has now ended. Funds raised in excess of the normal limits which have not been spent responding to the recall petitions must be returned to contributors, donated to charity or transferred to another committee. Detailed information about recall expense funds is available here: <http://gab.wi.gov/publications/other/recall-expense-funds>.

The first campaign finance reports for the recall elections will be due April 30, and will cover the time period from January 1 to April 23. For more information on campaign finance limits and reporting deadlines, consult the information on this page: <http://gab.wi.gov/campaign-finance/limits-deadlines>.

A primary election will be held only for any political party and offices for which more than one candidate qualifies for the ballot. If there is no primary, the final recall election in that race will be held May 8. Some people have suggested writing in the Governor’s name in a Democratic primary. The Board will be directing local election officials that those write-in votes should not be counted because the Governor will already a Republican Party candidate. Under state law, candidates cannot be a nominee for more than one political party.

In addition to ordering the recall elections, the Board voted unanimously to make a searchable database of recall petition signers’ names available on the Internet. The Board created a database of names – not addresses – to assist with finding and eliminating duplicate signatures. The database will go online Monday on the same website (<http://webapps.wi.gov/sites/recall>) used to post images of the recall petition pages. Users will be able to search by name, and the results will have links to the actual petition pages. The website will also display whether a signature was counted or struck, as well as the reason it was struck.

“We believe it is important for citizens to have access to the information our staff developed in its examination of the recall petitions,” Kennedy said. “The G.A.B. is committed to ensuring accountability of government officials and making their work as transparent as possible.” Posting the signatures online will allow the public to view the work of the staff and compare it to the work of Verify the Recall, the Tea Party group that has already created its own searchable database using thousands of volunteers, he said.

###

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.