

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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Recall Petition Update 5

Madison, WI – The Government Accountability Board today released digital copies of recall petitions for Lt. Governor Kleefisch.

In total, G.A.B. staff scanned 140,123 petition pages for the Lt. Governor’s recall, all of which were given to the Lt. Governor’s representative Friday, as well as released on the G.A.B.’s website. The Board has not yet estimated the number of signatures on the petitions, as the signature review process is just beginning.

The petitions are being released under Wisconsin’s Public Records Law, as well as a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Doe v. Reed*, involving the release of referendum petitions in Washington State. Unlike an elector’s vote, which is private and confidential, the signing of recall petition is a public process. The PDF copies released by the Board are not computer-searchable.

“The electoral process is the means our society has chosen to select leaders, establish public policy and hold public officials accountable without resort to intimidation or violence,” said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “While individuals with an interest in vetting these petitions have every right to do so, we expect that they will continue to do so in a respectful, lawful manner. All Wisconsin residents ought to agree that we can ensure the rights of individuals to participate in the political process without endangering their safety or giving up their right to personal security.”

Court of Appeals Ruling

On Friday, the District IV Court of Appeals issued a decision in the case Friends of Scott Walker and Stephan Thompson v. Michael Brennan, et al., regarding the G.A.B.’s responsibilities for finding and eliminating duplicate signatures on recall petitions.

We do not have any comment on the court order at this time. The Board will discuss the decision at its meeting Tuesday in closed session.

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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.