

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

17 W. Main St., Suite 310 ▪ Madison, WI 53703 ▪ gab@wi.gov ▪ (608) 266-8005 ▪ Help Desk (608) 261-2028 ▪ <http://gab.wi.gov>

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

Voter Turnout Estimated at 28 percent for Tuesday's Election

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board is predicting up to 28 percent of the voting age population – or approximately 1.2 million – will turn out to vote in the Tuesday, September 14 Partisan Primary Election.

“There appears to be tremendous interest in this election,” said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “The Governor’s office is open for the first time in many years, as are 20 percent of seats in the Legislature. There are also several contested congressional primaries in both major parties.”

Historically, the highest voter turnout in a September primary since 1960 was 27.9 percent in 1964. Wisconsin’s 2010 voting age population is 4,372,347 people. Statistics on past voter turnout and current voter registration are available at <http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/statistics>.

The major draw for this fall’s election cycle will be the office of Governor, which is open. The nominations for Governor and Lt. Governor are now contested in both major parties, with the Republican side of the contest expected to draw increased turnout. The most recent similar election was 2002, which had a turnout of 22.5 percent. There are six contested primaries among the statewide constitutional offices. There is also a Republican primary for U.S. Senate and seven primaries in the eight Congressional districts.

“We encourage voters to make their opinions count at every level of government,” Kennedy added. “Tuesday’s partisan primary election provides them an opportunity to influence who will be on the ballot in November.”

Wisconsin’s open primary system does not require voters to declare a party. However, primary voters may only vote for candidates of one party. A voter may indicate a party preference on the ballot which ensures that votes for candidates of that party will be counted in the event candidates from another party were inadvertently selected.

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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, or through the Internet at <http://gab.wi.gov>.