

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>

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

Voter Turnout Estimated at 50 percent for November 2 Election

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board is predicting up to half of the voting age population – or approximately 2.18 million people – will turn out to vote in the Tuesday, November 2 General Election.

“While there appears to be tremendous interest in this election, we do not believe it will be quite a record turnout,” 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.”

Historically, the highest voter turnout in an off-year general election since 1960 was 52.4 percent in 1962. In 2006, a year in which there was a statewide referendum on same-sex marriage, turnout was 50.9 percent. 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>.

“In September, we predicted a 28 percent turnout for the Partisan Primary Election, which turned out to be higher than the actual turnout of 19.6 percent,” Kennedy said. “Based on media coverage, it appears people are agitating for change. We did not see that energy translate into votes in the primary, but we expect significantly higher turnout in the general election.”

The major draw for this fall’s election cycle will be the office of Governor, which is open. The candidates for Governor and Lt. Governor run as a ticket. There is a close contest for U.S. Senate and several strong races in the eight Congressional districts, which we expect will increase turnout. And many communities have referendums on important local issues.

“We encourage voters to make their opinions count at every level of government,” said Nat Robinson, Elections Division administrator. “The General Election provides them an opportunity to make their voices heard from the courthouse to our state and nation’s capitols.”

Robinson urged voters to find sample ballots, locate their polling places and check their voter registration status online before Election Day at the Board’s Voter Public Access website: <https://vpa.wi.gov>.

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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.