

State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

212 East Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor
Post Office Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984
Voice (608) 266-8005
Fax (608) 267-0500
E-mail: gab@wisconsin.gov
<http://gab.wi.gov>



JUDGE GORDON MYSE
Chair

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

August 6, 2010

The Honorable Jim Doyle, Governor
Honorable Members of the Legislature
Wisconsin State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Governor Doyle and Legislators:

On behalf of the Government Accountability Board (Board), I am pleased to provide you with an Interim Report on Extending the Government Accountability Board's Hours of Operation for the 2010 Spring Election Cycle. This report summarizes an examination of clerks' requested extended hours of operation for Board staff, and the effectiveness of those hours during the 2010 February Spring Primary and April Spring Election in accordance with the Board's obligation under Section 7.08 (11), Wisconsin Statutes.

This statute was created by 2009 Wisconsin Act 28, Section 2q, enacted on June 29, 2009, and requires the Board to ensure that adequate staff are available to answer local election officials' questions for each statewide election and recount. Accordingly, the Board continued its established practice, previously based on past election experience, of offering extended operating hours during the 2010 Spring Election Cycle.

In our continuing effort to more effectively meet the needs of participants in the election process, we sought to solicit input from local election officials, our partners, on what extended hours would best meet their needs. 790 or 45.5% of the 1,738 clerks able to receive email notifications completed a survey and, in their responses, highlighted two aspects about extended hours. First, no one set of extended hours fits every election. Second, clerks desire greater Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) support before an election and Election Administration support on Election Day.

Additional data on the number and types of inquiries fielded by Board staff during the spring elections was captured in extended hours Election Activity Logs. The two main concerns reported on Election Day for the 2010 February Primary and April 6 Spring Election were issues at the polling place (i.e. voters at the wrong polling place, signs or buttons that upset other voters, Election Day registration confusion) and how to process absentee ballots. This suggests that more may need to be done to educate both voters and poll workers on how to handle common polling place issues, including unusual absentee situations.

This interim report summarizes the efforts of Board staff to meet customers' needs during the 2010 Spring Election Cycle. Following the 2010 November General Election, a Final Report on Extended Hours will be prepared to document our services during the Fall Election Cycle. The Final Report will also serve as an overall evaluation of the extended hours provided during the entire 2010 Election Season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin J. Kennedy".

Kevin J. Kennedy
Director and General Counsel
Government Accountability Board