

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

---

212 E. Washington Ave., Third Floor ▪ Madison, WI 53703 ▪ [gab@wi.gov](mailto:gab@wi.gov) ▪ (608) 266-8005 ▪ Help Desk (608) 261-2028 ▪ <http://gab.wi.gov>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
July 24, 2012

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

## August Primary Is Just Three Weeks Away

MADISON, WI – Wisconsin’s first partisan primary in August since World War II is August 14 – just three weeks away, the Government Accountability Board reminds voters.

The Legislature moved the partisan primary from the second Tuesday in September to the second Tuesday in August so Wisconsin can comply with a federal law designed to give military and overseas voters enough time to vote by absentee ballot, said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. Wisconsin last held partisan primaries in August in 1944 and 1946.

Kennedy reminded voters that because this is a partisan primary, they can only vote for candidates from one party. “Confusion about crossover voting is one of the biggest issues poll workers face during partisan primaries,” Kennedy said.

Voters do not declare a party in Wisconsin’s open primary system, but they may only vote for one party’s candidates. Voters may indicate a party preference on the ballot, ensuring votes for candidates of that party will be counted in case the voter inadvertently crossed over and marked the ballot for candidates in more than one political party.

The G.A.B. is predicting up to 20 percent of the voting age population – or approximately 870,500 voters – will turn out to vote in the partisan primary. Historically, the highest voter turnout in a non-gubernatorial fall primary in the last 20 years was 21 percent in 1992. Wisconsin’s 2012 voting age population is 4,352,762 people. Statistics on past voter turnout and current voter registration are available at <http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/statistics>.

“The biggest race – and the only statewide race – on August 14 is the Republican primary for United States Senate,” said Kennedy. “Because of redistricting, there are more legislative primaries than usual as many legislators are running in new districts.” Primaries are being held in two of eight Congressional districts, five of 16 State Senate districts and 39 of 99 State Assembly districts.

G.A.B. Elections Division Administrator Nat Robinson urged voters who may be unfamiliar with their new legislative districts to visit the Voter Public Access website: <http://vpa.wi.gov>, where they can check their registration status, find a polling place and see their sample ballot.

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

###

---

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.