

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

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## Beware of Unofficial Absentee Ballot Applications

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board has received several reports in recent weeks of unofficial absentee ballot applications potentially causing confusion among voters.

Kevin Kennedy, Wisconsin’s chief election officer, said that while it is legal for groups and political parties to produce and distribute absentee ballot applications, voters who wish to vote absentee need not rely on them. “If you need or want to vote absentee, contact your municipal clerk directly and request a ballot,” Kennedy said.

The G.A.B. has recently seen unofficial absentee ballot applications forms that contain errors, such as incorrect addresses and dates, Kennedy said. “There has been some confusion – intentional or unintentional – between the recall elections in Senate Districts 2, 8, 10, 12, 14, 18, 22, 32 on August 9 and the elections in Senate Districts 12 and 22 on August 16,” he said.

Elections Division Administrator Nathaniel E. Robinson said the G.A.B. has also received reports that some automated telephone calls and telephone polls in recent days have contained incorrect election dates. “If you are not sure when the election is in your area, call your local clerk or visit our Voter Public Access website at <http://vpa.wi.gov>,” said Robinson. VPA users can easily find their polling place locations and sample ballots, he said.

Kennedy said that if the address on the absentee ballot application mailer or envelope is incorrect, it could go to the wrong place. “If you rely on an incorrect date on the mailer, you may be too late to vote absentee,” he said.

Kennedy noted that the four-week period between the primaries in July and the recall elections on August 9 and August 16 is relatively short. “If you requested an absentee ballot and have not received one, you can always request one directly from your municipal clerk by mail or email, or vote in person,” he said.

Robinson also reminded voters that they may cast an in-person absentee ballot at their city, village or town clerk’s office during normal business hours until the Friday before the election.

Voters are encouraged to visit the G.A.B.’s website (<http://gab.wi.gov>) for information about the recall elections, as well as the ongoing “soft implementation” of the new Voter Photo ID law.

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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.