

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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G.A.B. Statement on *Citizens United*

MADISON, WI – Kevin J. Kennedy, director and general counsel of the Government Accountability Board, issued this statement today in light of the United States Supreme Court Decision in *Citizens United vs. FEC*:

“Clearly this is a significant decision. We are analyzing the case and its impact on the laws administered by the Government Accountability Board.”

“The Supreme Court declared that federal bans on independent corporate political expenditures are unconstitutional. However, it appears the court has upheld the principle of disclosure, which has always been a keystone of Wisconsin’s campaign finance laws.”

“Many legal commentators have already said they believe this decision will have a big impact on corporate spending in federal elections. The effect on state races is less clear. Only about half of the 50 states have bans on corporate campaign spending. Wisconsin has had a ban on corporate contributions and expenditures since 1905.”

“Based on our initial review, we believe the Citizens United decision should not affect the validity of the Board’s proposed issue ad rule or the issue ad bill recently passed by the state Senate.”

“We will continue to analyze this major decision and provide the Board with a full briefing at the March 23 meeting. We will also work closely with the Legislature as the implications of this case become better understood.”

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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>.