

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

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## Handwriting Issues Have Not Kept Candidates off Ballot

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board staff has not recommended that any candidates be kept off of the fall election ballot due to the illegibility of names on their nomination papers, an agency official said Wednesday.

The G.A.B. staff has completed its review of nomination papers from 316 candidates who filed by the deadline on Monday in preparation for the Board to finalize the ballot on June 10, said Elections Division Administrator Michael Haas. Nearly 100 candidates filed nomination papers on the day of the deadline, requiring staff to complete its review the following day.

“One challenge our staff faced this year is implementing a new state law on the legibility of names on petitions,” said Haas. “While our staff has struck names that are not legibly printed, that has not resulted in any candidates falling below the minimum number of signatures required to get on the ballot. We contacted candidates with petition legibility issues who filed before the deadline and let them know there could be an issue so they had time to collect and file additional signatures.”

Haas said the staff is recommending some candidates not be put on the ballot because they do not have enough valid signatures – but that the legibility issue is not the reason they fell short. The staff may still recommend more or less signatures be struck depending upon the outcome of challenges to specific candidate’s nomination papers.

Two candidates – one for governor and one for assembly – submitted old petition forms that did not have a space for signers to “legibly print” their name, as required by the new law that went into effect on April 1, 2014. Staff is recommending they not be placed on the ballot.

The G.A.B. will meet Tuesday at the State Capitol to consider challenges to candidates’ nominating papers, as well as appeals of the staff’s recommendations.

Candidates certified on Tuesday will appear on the ballot for the August 12 Partisan Primary. The primary winners will appear on the ballot for the November 4 General Election. State offices up for election in the November 4, 2014 General Election include five constitutional officers (Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State and State Treasurer) 17 State Senators and 99 Representatives to the Assembly. Federal offices on the ballot are eight U.S. Representatives.

The 316 candidate filings for 2014 were down from 379 in 2010, the last gubernatorial election. The biggest difference is in the number of candidates for the State Assembly. In 2014 there are

217, compared to 272 in 2010. In 2006 there were 291 total candidate filings and in 2002 there were 306.

### **Candidates Filing Nomination Papers in Gubernatorial Election Years**

<b>Office</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
Governor	14	3	10	6
Lt Governor	6	4	10	4
Attorney General	2	4	2	5
Secretary of State	4	4	2	5
Treasurer	4	4	6	7
US Senator	0	4	5	0
US House	19	26	31	31
State Senate	36	36	41	41
State Assembly	221	206	272	217
<b>Total</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>316</b>

When candidates file nomination papers, the Board's staff reviews them and makes an initial determination of whether the petition is sufficient – that it contains enough valid signatures and meets other requirements. Candidates have the ability to fix technical problems with their nomination papers, but cannot add additional signatures after the deadline. Candidates who disagree with the staff's recommendations can appeal them to the six former judges on the Government Accountability Board.

Also, anyone may file a challenge to a candidates nomination papers by 4:30 p.m. Thursday, June 5 after which the candidate has until 4:30 on Monday, June 9 to respond. The Board will decide those challenges at its meeting Tuesday. The meeting starts at 9 a.m. and will be carried live on Wisconsin Eye ([www.wiseye.org](http://www.wiseye.org)).

A list of all candidates who filed by the deadline and the number of valid signatures determined by the staff are available on the Board's web site: <http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2014/fall>. The Board's agenda is posted here: <http://gab.wi.gov/about/meetings/2014/june>. Because staff cannot finalize recommendations until after the deadline for candidate responses on Monday, those recommendations are not expected to be posted until Tuesday morning.

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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.