

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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G.A.B.'s Voter Photo ID Public Information and Public Education Plan Receives Legislative Approval

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board received approval Friday from the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance for its plan to inform and educate the public about Wisconsin's new Voter Photo ID law, its requirements and ways that the State's residents can meet those standards.

"Educating Wisconsin's voters and local election officials about the law's many new requirements is a critical part of implementing voter ID," said Kevin J. Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. "We want to make sure all electors understand the law, and that everyone has the proper photo ID to vote in February 2012."

Before the G.A.B. spent any money on the public information and public outreach campaigns required by Act 23, the new state budget required the Board to obtain approval from the Joint Committee on Finance under the 14-day passive review process. The G.A.B. submitted a proposed plan to the committee on July 1, and the Committee gave its approval Friday, July 14, in a letter from its co-chairs, Senator Alberta Darling and Representative Robin Vos, stating no member of the committee had raised an objection to the plan.

Of the \$1.9 million appropriated for implementing the law, \$1.35 million will be spent for public information, public outreach, and education/training, said Nathaniel E. Robinson, elections division administrator. "All three of these components will work together and provide an effective combined tool to educate the public and local election officials about the details of Wisconsin's new law," Robinson said. The \$1.35 million includes funding for expanded Board staff, who will implement the outreach effort.

The Board will use one of the existing state contracts with an advertising agency to assist the staff in developing a multimedia public information campaign to be deployed in waves prior to the February 2012 and April 2012 elections, as required by Act 23, and prior to the Fall 2012 Partisan Primary and General Elections, which involve much higher voter turnout than the Spring elections. The Board will also make extensive use of news releases and free public service announcements.

The Board and the agency will also develop a public outreach campaign to identify groups of voters who may not have an acceptable form of photo ID, and develop educational materials to

reach those groups, which include the elderly, minority and student voters, rural and urban communities, voters with disabilities, and others.

The Board will also train, educate and provide technical assistance to Wisconsin's local election officials for implementing the new law. Wisconsin has 1,850 municipal clerks and thousands more election workers who will need continuing training and technical assistance to uniformly implement the new law across the state.

A copy of the approved plan is available on the Board's website:

<http://gab.wi.gov/publications/reports/photo-id-plan-jcf>.

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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.