

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

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## G.A.B. Announces Statewide Voter Photo ID Public Education Campaign

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board has launched a statewide “Bring It to the Ballot” multimedia campaign to educate Wisconsin residents about the voter photo ID law that will be in effect for the November 4 General Election.

“Now that the voter photo ID requirement is back in place, we need to remind voters to bring their IDs to the polling place,” said Kevin Kennedy, Wisconsin’s chief election official. “The campaign’s message is that most people already have the ID they need to vote. If they don’t have one, they can get a free ID for voting at the DMV, even if they don’t have some documents like a birth certificate.”

“If voters do not have an acceptable photo ID, they should start taking steps to get one now,” Kennedy urged. “Don’t wait until the last minute to make sure you are able to vote.”

The campaign is designed to raise awareness and encourage the public to go to a website ([BringIt.Wisconsin.gov](http://BringIt.Wisconsin.gov)) where they can learn more about what IDs are acceptable and how they can get a free ID if they need one for voting. The campaign’s TV and radio ads, short videos and printable brochures are available on the website.

The campaign began running last week as paid public service announcements on TV and radio stations that are members of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association. Starting this weekend, the G.A.B. plans to spend more than \$400,000 on the statewide paid advertising campaign that will run in the three weeks leading up to the election. The campaign will include TV, radio, online and some billboard ads.

“There is very little time left to reach out to the public,” Kennedy said. “The low-cost program from broadcasters is a good value over a long period of time, but it cannot be guaranteed to effectively reach large numbers of voters so close to the election, so we need to buy advertising at market rates.”

Initially, funding for the ad campaign will come from the G.A.B.’s current budget. Wisconsin’s 2013-15 biennial budget included \$460,800 for five project positions for the G.A.B. to implement voter photo ID, which has been held in the Joint Committee on Finance’s supplemental appropriation and could be made available in the event the court injunctions were lifted. The committee’s co-chairs cancelled a meeting originally scheduled for Tuesday to

consider the G.A.B.'s request to release the funds. However, they have written a letter to Kennedy urging the G.A.B. to go ahead with the campaign using existing agency resources and seek reimbursement for actual costs after the election, and they have pledged their personal support for the request.

Kennedy said the G.A.B. must start the campaign in order for it to be effective and is relying on the assurance of the co-chairs that the funds will be reimbursed, to avoid a significant impact on the agency's budget and operations.

The campaign will be statewide, and decisions about specific ad buys are based on recommendations from the Board's advertising agency, KW2 of Madison. The broadcast media buys include more than 2,100 TV ads and more than 3,100 radio ads statewide.

Kennedy said the G.A.B. hired KW2 in 2011 to develop the campaign because the agency has extensive experience working for the state of Wisconsin on public education campaigns. KW2 currently manages the anti-tobacco campaign for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the anti-heroin campaign for the Wisconsin Department of Justice. Stations with questions about ad placement should contact KW2 directly.

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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.