

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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Accountability Board Sets Guidelines for Election Observers

Polling places prepared for record voter turnout on November 4th

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) announced today that election observers will follow new guidelines at the polls this year.

“Election observers have been an important part of the election process in Wisconsin for a number of years,” said Kevin J. Kennedy, Wisconsin’s Chief Election Officer. “Participation from outside observers helps assure voters of an open and transparent election process.”

Under state law, every eligible voter, other than the candidate, has the right to observe the public aspects of the election process, whether it is at the polls on Election Day, or during the official canvass which follows. After the polls close, candidates may be present to observe the vote counting process.

In the past, some voters would confuse observers with election officials at the polling places. Last month however, the G.A.B. issued a new set of rules for observers to follow at the polls on November 4. Under the new rules, observers will meet with the chief election inspector, sign-in and identify the specific candidate or organization is representing, and wear nametags so voters can easily distinguish observers from election officials.

“These rules will help voters understand the role that observers play in the election process,” according to Nat Robinson, G.A.B. Elections Division Administrator.

In addition, the new rules will ensure that voters will not be distracted by the conduct or behavior of observers in the polling place. Observers are prohibited from interacting with voters, taking photos or handling official election documents.

“All of the 2,822 polling places in Wisconsin have been working hard to prepare for a record voter turnout on November 4th,” Kennedy said. “Implementing these new rules for observers is just one of the steps we have taken to make sure every voter’s experience will be positive, and that every vote will count.”

For more information on the new rules for election observers or other election information visit the G.A.B. website at <http://elections.wi.gov>.

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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. Additional information about the mission of the G.A.B. may be obtained by telephone at **1-608-266-8005**, by electronic mail at **gab@wi.gov**, or through the Internet at **<http://gab.wi.gov>**.