

Election Update



February 2009

WISCONSIN GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

Every voter counts.

Elections Division Prepares Legislative Agenda for 2009-2010 Session in Madison

The Government Accountability Board has endorsed a 2009-10 legislative agenda for the Wisconsin Elections Division and the list is being prepared for presentation to legislators and oversight committees. The agenda includes both major policy issues and technical clarifications. While comments from local election officials helped shape the draft agenda, the Elections Division invites more suggestions from clerks as the process moves to the Capitol.

A short list of topics currently included on the agenda is as follows:

- Exploration of early voting in Wisconsin
- Elimination of requirement to record prank or unregistered write-in candidates
- Changes to overseas voting requirements: Remote access, witness requirement, and general simplification
- Revision and clarification of the recount process
- Simplification of the process for government employees to serve as poll workers and other election officials
- Numerous changes to the absentee voting process

The 2009-10 legislative agenda is posted to the G.A.B. homepage. The list is dynamic and subject to amendment.

Updated GAB-190 Forms to be Required for Spring 2009 Elections

A slightly revised GAB-190 form has been sent to local election officials and posted to the Elections Division homepage on the G.A.B. website. The new form should be used to report election data from the February 17, 2009 spring primary. Based on comments from clerks, some questions have been reworded for greater clarity, and questions 8, 9 and 10 include dates which help indicate the version of the form.

Municipalities are still eligible for an incentive payment of \$100 per reporting unit for each reporting unit for the November 4, 2008 election, and qualify by submitting a complete, correct GAB-190 form. Election officials wishing to verify the status of their forms, or with questions, should contact Kate Schleitwiler at 608-261-2009.

Preparations Underway to Review Alternatives for SVRS Improvements

An Ad Hoc Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) Study Team has begun to evaluate the system, and suggestions for improvements submitted by SVRS users, to plan for long-term improvements. The team will assess long-term alternatives after prioritizing those suggestions. The list of alternatives will help drive long-term solutions to various SVRS challenges, such as application performance/response time, and functionality gaps such as how reports are generated from the system. Local election officials may continue to submit feedback to Team Leader Sarah Whitt at sarah.whitt@wi.gov, or 608-261-2034.

Other Items: Municipal Clerk Training, and Presidents Day and Absentee Voting

- To recertify for the 2009-10 term, municipal clerks must have training completed and reported to the Elections Division by February 13, 2009. Clerks must have six hours of election training every two years. An updated list of clerks who have not achieved compliance will be posted on the G.A.B. website on Monday, February 9. Details about fulfilling the requirement is under "Clerk Information," "Training," then "Municipal Clerk Training."
- Monday, February 16th is President's Day and the deadline to receive absentee ballot applications and to cast absentee ballots for most electors in the next day's primary election. If a clerk's office is closed on February 16th, and the Type E notice did not exclude that day for absentee voting, a new Type E notice should be published **next week**, preferably on Tuesday if possible. The amended notice should advise voters of new deadlines due to the closing of the clerk's office.

#41