

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Monday, May 4, 2009

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Report to Accountability Board: Poll Shows Wisconsin's Voters More Satisfied Than Neighbor States'

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) tomorrow will receive a report which shows Wisconsin voters were more satisfied with their November 2008 Election Day experiences than voters in other states.

Wisconsinites said they were very satisfied with their voting experience 90 percent of the time, while other Big Ten states averaged 85 percent, and the rest of the nation as a whole 86 percent.

"We are very happy that the overall administration of elections in Wisconsin seems to meet with voters' approval," said Kevin Kennedy, G.A.B. Director. "The public's confidence in government is rooted in fair and transparent elections."

At the May G.A.B. meeting, Board members will receive the results of the Big Ten Battleground Poll conducted just after the November election. The survey was developed in conjunction with the UW Madison Political Science Department.

The poll compares Wisconsin voters' opinions with those in the Big Ten states and a nationwide sample.

Wisconsin voters were also more likely to be very confident that their ballots had been counted as they intended: 87 percent of voters in Wisconsin were very confident, while 82 percent in other Big Ten states and 83 percent in the rest of the nation felt the same.

"Local election officials work very hard before Election Day to make sure the voting process is secure and smooth," said Nat Robinson, Elections Division Administrator. "Clerks from the largest cities to the smallest school districts deserve credit for problem-free elections."

Another sign of voter satisfaction may be how long it takes to cast a ballot. In Wisconsin, 75 percent of poll respondents said it took 10 minutes or less to vote, while in other Big Ten states only 55 percent voted in the same period of time. In the rest of the nation, 66 percent reported voting in 10 minutes or less.

Perhaps because of that, 72 percent of Wisconsin voters polled reported voting in person on Election Day, compared with 69 percent in other Big Ten states and 64 percent in the rest of the U.S.

Finally, and not surprisingly, 92 percent of other Big Ten states' voters and 90 percent of those in other states registered to vote before Election Day, but only 86 percent registered in advance in Wisconsin. Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota are the only Midwestern states with same-day registration.

The poll was conducted immediately after the November 4, 2008 General Election. In Wisconsin, 662 respondents were questioned, and another 2,231 were polled in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Poll interviews were conducted by telephone with live interviewers.

Dr. Barry Burden, UW Political Science professor will present the report to the G.A.B. Burden also is evaluating the G.A.B.'s implementation of a federal grant to improve the collection and reporting of election data and related election administration practices. Information about the Big Ten Poll is available at www.bigtenpoll.org.

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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>.