

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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Government Accountability Board asks voters for help correcting voter information errors

MADISON, WI – More than 100,000 Wisconsin residents will be getting letters from the Government Accountability Board asking them to verify their voter information.

The letters are required by state and federal law under the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002. The law requires the state to compare voter information in the Statewide Voter Registration System with driver license data as a way to find and correct errors, improving the quality of voter lists.

Letter recipients are being asked to call the Government Accountability Board because some part of their voter information does not match information on their driver license or State ID card. It could be a variation in a name spelling – Bob versus Robert, for example – or a difference in driver license number caused by a clerical error.

By contacting the board within 10 days, voters can help ensure their records are correct – and minimize the chances that their information might get confused with other voters with similar names or ID numbers. The process should only take a few minutes.

The board asks voters responding to the letter to have their driver license or State ID card handy to verify the information on it. Voters who do not have a driver license or State ID card may be asked for the last four digits of their Social Security number. This information, including a voter's date of birth, is considered confidential, and is protected under state law.

In these privacy-conscious times, the GAB wants to assure voters that the letters are legitimate, and not a scam.

“These letters are an essential tool for protecting the accuracy of the voter lists,” said Kevin J. Kennedy, director and general counsel of the Government Accountability Board. “While Wisconsin law requires voters to provide driver license numbers or the last four numbers of their SSN to register to vote, the law also protects access to that information. Only local election clerks and GAB staff have access to that private information. Our purpose is to update and correct the statewide voter list.”

Voters who do not respond to the mailing will not lose their eligibility to vote, said Nathaniel E. Robinson, elections division administrator of the Government Accountability Board. But by clearing up any discrepancies now, voters can save time and avoid possible delays on Election Day, he said.

The mailing is being sent only to voters who registered between January 1, 2006 and August 6, 2008. Approximately 85,000 letters are being mailed initially statewide. Clerks in about 600 municipalities are partnering with the Government Accountability Board to verify information on another 20,000 voters. Letters from the board to voters whose information can not be verified by local clerks will be mailed in early Fall 2009.

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The Government Accountability Board is responsible for administration and enforcement of campaign finance, elections, ethics and lobbying laws in Wisconsin. The board 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 Government Accountability Board is available by telephone at **1-608-266-8005**, by electronic mail at **gab@wi.gov**, or through the Internet at **<http://gab.wi.gov>**.