

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

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### Voters Respond Heavily to G.A.B. Letter

MADISON, WI – The initial response to letters mailed to thousands of Wisconsin voters last week is exceeding expectations, according to the Government Accountability Board.

“We thank the voters for their time and patience as we work to answer all their phone calls and e-mails,” said Kevin J. Kennedy, director and general counsel of the Government Accountability Board. “Our staff is focused on responding as quickly as possible to voters who call in to verify their information.”

The board is required by state and federal law under the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 to contact voters if some part of their voter information does not match information on their driver license. It could be a middle initial or variation in a name spelling – Bob versus Robert, for example. In some cases, the reason is a difference in driver license number or date of birth caused by a clerical error.

Nathaniel E. Robinson, elections division administrator, said the purpose of this effort is to improve data quality and make sure the Statewide Voter Registration System has the most accurate information possible – not to remove voters from the list. “Voters who may have trouble getting through do not need to worry about losing their ability to vote,” he said.

Some voters who called in have gotten busy signals. Others may have received a message that a voice mailbox is full.

Robinson said that if voters are uncomfortable discussing their information on the telephone or do not wish to make a long-distance call, they are welcome to take the letter to their local municipal clerk’s office. Clerks, our local election partners, also have access to the Statewide Voter Registration System, and can update the records in their offices.

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

The mailing is being sent only to voters who registered between January 1, 2006 and August 6, 2008. Approximately 85,000 letters were mailed initially statewide last week. 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.

The board appreciates the cooperation of voters as it ensures the Statewide Voter Registration System has the highest possible voter data quality. Eliminating typographical errors in names, dates and driver license numbers helps the board find duplicate records in the system. This, in turn, helps ensure voters' records follow them when they move. It also helps when we match our records against death and felon records to prevent voter fraud.

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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](mailto:gab@wi.gov)**, or through the Internet at **<http://gab.wi.gov>**.