

Early Voting Listening Session – Clerk’s Session
Kenosha County Center
July 22, 2009
Kenosha, WI

Notes & Feedback
CLERK ATTENDANCE: (33)

- **Comments and Feedback on Early Voting in General**

1. Wisconsin is not ready for early voting. Instead, G.A.B needs to streamline the current in-person absentee voting process.
2. There are lots of problems with true early voting. In particular, managing and staffing early vote sites, and creating additional reporting units for those sites.
3. There is no huge difference between our current in-person absentee voting and true early voting, since most of the public assumes they early vote when voting in-person absentee at their municipal clerks’ office before Election Day under current procedures.
4. There is no room in municipal or county budgets to allow for early voting. Therefore, G.A.B. should just streamline the current in person absentee voting (i.e., get rid of some of the paperwork and documents involved), and make all changes standard across the state.
5. Any early voting mandate must offer flexibility to reflect the reality of smaller communities vs. larger communities.
6. Any added voter confusion caused by implement early voting will just “disenfranchise” people, as a result of their own confusion.
7. Having an early voter list to check at the polling place, in addition to the other voter lists, will simply drive away poll workers.
8. Elections are muddy and expensive. Why are we catering to people who ask for early voting? There should only be one Election Day.

9. Responsibility on the electorate must come into play in our discussions about early voting. Voter accountability should be expected in all of this.

- **Comments and Feedback on Option A, Regional Early Voting Districts**

1. No support.
2. Option A may work for part time municipal clerks who work from home, since they could rely on a region to manage the early voting sites on their behalf. However, there still may be a lot of voter confusion, since voters will think that they can vote anywhere, anytime within their region before or on Election Day.

- **Comments and Feedback on Option B, Municipalities Opt Into Early Voting**

1. No support.
2. Option B causes the most confusion because it set up different procedures throughout the state.

- **Comments and Feedback on Option C, Streamlining In-Person Absentee Voting**

1. Near-unanimous support.
2. With Option C cut the deadline off on the Wednesday before the election, instead of the Friday before as recommended. Moving back the date to Wednesday is important; Friday does not allow for enough time to get everything prepared for Election Day.
3. With Option C (*and under the current practice*) the voter registration process continues to be a huge problem. Mainly, because it requires staff to go into SVRS and enter the system at the same time. People cannot

register and vote at the same time, this is making the clerk's job more difficult. Fix same day registration!

- **Comments and Feedback on Early Voting Equipment and Ballot Security**
 1. DRE machines – breaking the seals on the DRE machines for early voting (i.e. removing the receipt tape) can cause voter discomfort when witnessed.
 2. Questions asked: Overnight ballot security – how locked up do they need to be? Would more security than a locked room with known keys be required?
 3. After several years the public seems to understand the new way of voting (i.e., the new HAVA voting requirements) and the new voting machines. With early voting this will change once again and cause more public confusion.