

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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U.S. Election Assistance Commission Chair to Visit Wisconsin

MADISON, WI – Commissioner Gineen Beach, chair of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, will be in Wisconsin on Monday, October 19, and Tuesday, October 20, for collaboration and fact-finding meetings with state and local officials about elections.

Commissioner Beach's visit comes as the Government Accountability Board submits its 2009-2014 Election Administration Plan to the US-EAC, a bipartisan Federal agency created by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 to distribute election aid to states for improving election administration.

Kevin J. Kennedy, director and general counsel of the Government Accountability Board, said the G.A.B. (and its predecessor the State Elections Board) has received \$50 million in HAVA funds since 2004, and is due to receive an additional \$3.9 million upon US-EAC acceptance of Wisconsin's plan, which was approved October 13 by the Legislative Joint Committee on Finance.

"We have an excellent working relationship with the US-EAC," said Kennedy, noting that the agency received a \$2 million, competitively-awarded grant for Election Data Collection Improvement last year, which is managed by the US-EAC.

Overall, HAVA funds account for about 82.5 percent of the Board's spending since 2004.

"We have a strong partnership with US-EAC, and HAVA funding has had a significant impact on Wisconsin's election process," said Nathaniel E. Robinson, the G.A.B.'s Elections Division administrator.

Public Schedule

Noon to 2 p.m. Monday – Commissioner Beach will be meeting with the Wisconsin Election Administration Council, an advisory body comprised of local election officials and representatives of community groups interested in election issues. She will also be meeting with state legislative leaders, the Governor and other Administration officials. She has expressed a strong interest in learning about the impact of HAVA on local elections.

2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday – Commissioner Beach will be available for a Conversation with Members of the Public.

2:30 p.m. Tuesday – Joint news conference with Commissioner Beach and Mr. Kennedy.

Background

Commissioner Beach has experience in both state and federal election law. She has served on the US-EAC since October 2008 following her appointment by President George W. Bush, and was elected chair of the four-member commission for 2009.

Prior to her appointment to the US-EAC, Commissioner Beach was the minority elections counsel for the Committee on House Administration. She previously served as a policy advisor to former Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. where her primary area of focus was on election law. She also served as an attorney-advisor for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, where she reviewed and prosecuted applications for federal trademark registration. She also served as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Arrie W. Davis, in the Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

Ms. Beach received her Juris Doctor in 1999 from Western New England College School of Law where she was a member of the Law Review. In 1995, she received a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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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>**.