



LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Office of the City Clerk

100 North Appleton Street

Appleton, WI 54911

Phone: 920/832-6443

Fax: 920/832-5823

"...meeting community needs...enhancing quality of life."

January 13, 2015

Via E: Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

Senator Robert Cowles
Room 118 South State Capitol Building
P O Box 7882
Madison WI 53707-7882

RE: GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

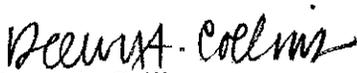
Thank you in advance for your consideration of this letter of feedback on the Government Accountability Board (GAB).

As a municipal clerk since 2007, I can attest to the reliance that a Clerk's office has on the assistance that is provided by GAB. The array of resources seems overwhelming in the midst of election activity - including creating consistency of Election Administration across the state, being a resource for training and management of voter registration with utilization of the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS), accessibility audits, to name just a few. With ongoing legislation relating to the election process, simply the communication resource has proven to be integral to the operation of a municipal clerk's office, as well as electors.

I am requesting that you please support the continuation of GAB, perhaps with some adjustment as it relates to the December 2014 analysis. This resource not only reaches municipal clerks but also elected officials and the electors across the State of Wisconsin.

Kindly consider supporting the existence of the Government Accountability Board.

Sincerely,


Dawn A. Collins
City Clerk



Ashland

WISCONSIN

CITY CLERK

601 Main Street West
Ashland, WI 54806
Phone: 715-682-7075

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing on GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board (GAB) and the audit of the GAB. As a municipal clerk with several years of experience working for the City of Ashland, I can assure you that I am extremely vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel I must speak up as potential legislation on this matter may extremely negatively impact the functionality of municipal elections and the election process.

When I first began my duties as Municipal Clerk, the GAB was an extremely valuable resource during my transition and process to accumulate as much information as possible to understand the complexities of managing a municipal election. The GAB has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism. In light of ever changing laws and scrutiny, the GAB has been a consistent and solid source of timely guidance on ever changing election laws.

The GAB has thankfully taken on a very large role in providing guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders and forms. Most importantly, the GAB provides oversight to keep elections in Wisconsin impartial in an often tumultuous political climate. Statewide systems and procedures from the GAB gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud and abuse across municipal borders much easier; voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in; and translating legislation into process and procedures is done both timely and in an excellent manner.

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. Frankly, I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their fine work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin as this organization currently exists.

With regard to the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report, this is a great tool for self-improvement! Respectfully, there is no individual, business, government agency or legislator who can say they have no room for improvement. We all have room and should strive daily for it by assessing what went well and working

towards the betterment in those areas that did not. The LAB audit is meant for that purpose and using it for any other agenda is just wrong. Instead of considering reorganization of the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Garness".

CITY OF ASHLAND
Mary Garness, CMC
City Clerk/HR Director

From: LeMire, Rebecca [mailto:lemirer@ci.beloit.wi.us]
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2015 4:02 PM
To: Sen.Cowles; Rep.Kerkman
Cc: Haas, Michael R - GAB; Loudenbeck, Amy; Rep.Spreitzer; Sen.Ringhand; Sen.Nass
Subject: LAB Audit of the GAB

To the Honorable Robert Cowles and the Honorable Samantha Kerkman:

Please accept this email as written testimony regarding the Government Accountability Board for the upcoming public hearing.

I have worked with several staff members at the GAB over the four years that I have been the City Clerk for the City of Beloit. The existence of this neutral agency is essential during these politically-charged times. In the four years that I have been the Clerk, I have participated in local redistricting efforts, changed polling places, experienced Voter ID go into and out of effect at least four times, administered up to 6 elections per year, participated in accessibility audits of several polling places, managed numerous election law changes, and purchased new vote tabulating equipment – just to name a few major events. Completing these tasks successfully could not have happened without the knowledge, expertise, and support of the staff at the GAB.

I have participated in countless training webinars produced and presented by GAB staff. I have attended many Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) training sessions in the GAB office. The GAB sends staff to every Wisconsin Municipal Clerk's Association annual conference and many regional meetings.

Wisconsin Clerks are a diverse group of people with educational and experience levels that range from one end of the spectrum to the other. The GAB has found ways to communicate effectively with all of us, which is no small task. The bottom line is that the staff members at the GAB are invaluable to the administration of elections at the local level. GAB staff members are intelligent, thought-provoking, and helpful. They provide consistency for Clerks during inconsistent times.

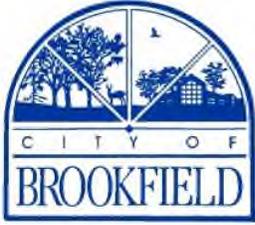
Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Houseman LeMire

Rebecca Houseman LeMire | City Clerk
D. 608 364 6684 | C. 608 751 7766
lemirer@beloitwi.gov

CITY OF БЕLOIT
100 State Street Beloit, WI 53511
P. 608 364 6600
Pop. 36,966 (2010 Census)

beloitwi.gov



Kelly Michaels
City Clerk
2000 N Calhoun Rd
Brookfield WI 53005
(262) 782-9650

January 9, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk with over 25 years of experience working for three different municipalities over the years, I can assure you I am vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel I must speak up.

When I first began my duties in local government, election management was handled with little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training, methods and procedures were home grown and there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and frankly not much accountability.

The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism. The GAB has thankfully taken on a very large role in providing guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders and forms. Most importantly, the GAB provides oversight to keep elections in Wisconsin fair! Statewide systems and procedures from the GAB gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud and abuse across municipal borders much easier; voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in; and translating legislation into process and procedures is done superbly!

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. Frankly, I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their fine work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin.

With regard to the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report. This is a great tool for self-improvement! Respectfully, there is no individual, business, government agency or legislator who can say they have no room for improvement. We all have room and should strive daily for it by assessing what went well and working towards the betterment in those areas that did not. The LAB audit is meant for that purpose and using it for any other agenda is just wrong.

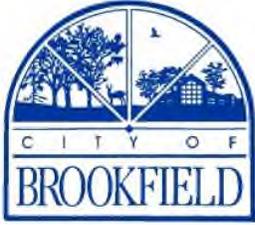
Instead of considering to disband the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,
CITY OF BROOKFIELD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'KM', written in a cursive style.

Kelly Michaels, CMC, WCMC
City Clerk



Kelly Michaels
City Clerk
2000 N Calhoun Rd
Brookfield WI 53005
(262) 782-9650

January 9, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Representative Kerkman:

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Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,
CITY OF BROOKFIELD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'KM', written in a cursive style.

Kelly Michaels, CMC, WCMC
City Clerk

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk with over 20 years of experience, I can assure you I am vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel compelled to share my thoughts with you.

When I first began my duties in local government, election management was handled with little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training, methods and procedures were home grown and there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and frankly not much accountability.

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Instead of considering to disband the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Helen Schmidlkofer

Helen Schmidlkofer, MMC
City Clerk
City of Chilton
42 School Street
Chilton, WI 53014



City of Chippewa Falls

30 WEST CENTRAL STREET, CHIPPEWA FALLS, WISCONSIN 54729

January 13, 2015

Via email only

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

Reference: Public Hearing regarding Government Accountability Board (GAB) Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

I currently serve the City of Chippewa Falls as City Clerk, and recently celebrated my three year anniversary in this capacity. As someone new to public service, I was not entirely sure what I was getting into, but I was excited for the challenge.

In preparation for my interview with the City, I visited two websites; the City's website and the website of the Government Accountability Board. Both gave me a breadth of information pertaining to the position I was applying for, and quite frankly, I was excited to see the support network offered by the GAB. Whether it was election administration training opportunities or the calendar of election and campaign events, the information was at my fingertips.

Let's just say my first year was a bit of a whirlwind; five elections (one of which was a Presidential), an unprecedented recall election, conducting training for Election Officials when I was only 30 days in to the job...the list goes on from there. To be quite candid, I am not sure how I would have successfully accomplished what I did that first year without the guidance of the GAB.

Based upon this support and guidance, I felt compelled to write this letter. The GAB has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process becomes more and more difficult to administer as Legislation continually changes. Thankfully, the GAB arms Clerks with the most up-to-date information as recently proven when the GAB worked tirelessly to help Clerks implement Voter Photo ID in the middle of a very busy General Election cycle.

Home of The World's Purest Water

715-726-2701 • FAX - 715-726-2759

Senator Robert Cowles

January 13, 2015

Page 2

More important than training, education, consistent procedures, manuals, notices, reminders, and forms, the GAB provides oversight to keep elections in Wisconsin fair. A non-partisan approach is the only approach that should be taken by individuals in this capacity. Reverting back to a State Elections Board governed by partisan political appointees is not the answer. There is a reason the Legislature created the GAB in its present form to begin with.

I challenge you to answer how an agency that has been hailed as a national model, with its performance during elections ranked among the best in the country, could need a complete overhaul. There is an old adage I prescribe to, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Before Legislators begin a major overhaul of an agency that is not broken, I implore you to consider the feedback of those who actually work with the agency on a day-to-day basis. The type of oversight and accountability the GAB provides is crucial in instilling confidence and consistency in the electoral process.

With regard to the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report, it should be considered nothing more than guidelines for continuous improvement. Using the LAB audit for any other agenda is wrong.

I encourage you to listen openly to those providing testimony at the public hearing, truly read and reflect on the written words of Clerks throughout the state you represent, and strongly urge you to provide the support needed for the GAB to continue to function in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bridget Givens".

Bridget Givens
City Clerk



City of Chippewa Falls

30 WEST CENTRAL STREET, CHIPPEWA FALLS, WISCONSIN 54729

January 13, 2015

Via email only

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

Reference: Public Hearing regarding Government Accountability Board (GAB) Performance

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Representative Samantha Kerkman

January 13, 2015

Page 2

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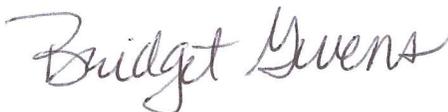
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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bridget Givens".

Bridget Givens
City Clerk

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

Dear Senator Cowles and Representative Kerkman:

I would like to reach out and let you know how I feel about the potential restructuring of the Government Accountability Board and why I believe it will be detrimental to the integrity of elections in Wisconsin.

I came on as municipal clerk of the City of De Pere one week before the recall election of Governor Scott Walker. I still look back to that week and feel grateful to the GAB for what they did to help me get through that first election as a municipal clerk. Without them, I don't know what I would have done to get through that election. I am truly amazed by what they are able to accomplish with the over 1800 clerks administering elections in the state of Wisconsin. They have accessible and informative training webinars and seminars and materials at the fingertips of clerks and poll workers throughout the state. The changes that they have had to implement have been nonstop since I started as a clerk, and I am grateful to have them by my side to guide me through them. I feel confident in training my poll workers because I am confident that I have a firm understanding of state election laws and it is all thanks to the GAB and their staff.

The Statewide Voter Registration System that they oversee has been an invaluable tool for the State; their staff providing support for the software is always helpful and knowledgeable and this system saves me hours of time in election preparation work.

I have never thought the GAB to be a partisan organization; I know that everyone has their political beliefs and I have never thought of the GAB as anything but supportive and non-partisan, just as I believe I should be in my role as municipal clerk.

I urge you to take this audit as it is: a starting point to guide the GAB to making improvements. We have an excellent election system in the state of Wisconsin. I feel lucky to be a part of it, and I know that what we have would not be possible without the GAB and everything that they've done to administer elections in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your service to our state, and thank you for taking into consideration my thoughts on the GAB.

Happy New Year!

Shana Defnet, Clerk-Treasurer, City of De Pere



City Clerk / City Elections
Phone: (715) 839-4912
Fax: (715) 839-6177

January 13, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
Co-chair Joint Legislative Audit Committee
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
Co-chair Joint Legislative Audit Committee
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

On Wednesday, January 14, 2015, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee will hold a public hearing on Audit Report 14-14 regarding the Government Accountability Board. Several factors prevent me from attending the hearing in person, but I hope you will give my written comments equal consideration.

I have worked with municipal elections for 25 years and one thing I have learned is 'the only thing constant with elections is change'. These changes, new requirements, come from both the state and federal level. The expertise and guidance on how to implement these new duties comes from the GAB. The Board acts as the liaison between legislature (the new laws) and municipalities (how those new laws are to be implemented).

The work load associated with elections has increase many-fold in the past decade. The GAB provides training, education, procedures, manuals, notices, forms, support and guidance to clerks and voters. They provide functions on a state-wide level, that if left to municipalities, smaller governments would have a very hard time accomplishing.

The last three years have been extremely active for anyone involved with elections. The staff at the GAB is professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their work. I hope the Committee allows the GAB to use the Legislative Audit Bureau's Report as a tool to see which jobs remain incomplete, to finish those, and improve other areas. I would encourage the Committee to support the GAB and provide it with them the necessary funding and staffing to carry out its duties.

I believe the current structure of the Board is the best for continued independent, non-partisan conduct of elections in Wisconsin. It is the best for the municipal and county clerks, as well as for the candidates and voters of our state.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Donna Austad, CMC
City of Eau Claire (pop 66,000)

203 S. Farwell St., P.O. Box 5148, Eau Claire, WI 54702-5148
cityhall@ci.eau-claire.wi.us



Administrative Offices
5520 Lacy Road
Fitchburg, WI 53711-5318
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www.fitchburgwi.gov

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing – regarding GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk, I feel it's important that I speak up.

I was appointed to the City Clerk position here with the City of Fitchburg in August of 2014. Prior to my appointment, I served as Deputy Clerk for 6 ½ years. During my years as Deputy Clerk and my short time as City Clerk, the Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource to me. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism. The GAB has played an important role to me during my years of service. Their support, guidance, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders and forms are invaluable to all clerks across the State. In my new role as City Clerk, my responsibilities to the election process would be so much more difficult without their guidance. Some days I feel as though I have them on speed dial. Through all of my contacts, they are always helpful and I know my job would be extremely difficult without their guidance and expertise.

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly, non-partisan in carrying out their function. I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin.

I feel the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report should be used as a tool for self-improvement. We all have room for improvement professionally and personally. I don't believe there is any individual, business, government agency or legislator who can say they have no room for improvement. We should all reassess our work and look towards ways to improve where we may be lacking. I feel that the LAB audit is meant for that purpose and using it for any other agenda is just wrong.

Instead of considering to dis-band the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patti Anderson".

Patti Anderson, WCMC
City Clerk

Testimony of Sandra L. Wesolowski
City of Franklin Director of Clerk Services/City Clerk

January 14, 2015

Room 411 South, State Capitol
Public Hearing
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
Audit of Government Accountability Board

Co-Chairperson Kerkman, Co-Chairperson Cowles, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Legislative Audit Bureau's audit of the Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.). I am Sandi Wesolowski, Director of Clerk Services/City Clerk for the City of Franklin. I have been with the City of Franklin for 30 years and also worked with elections in another municipality for 8 years prior to that. I was appointed to the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) Standards Board in 2002 as the local election official for Wisconsin, served as Vice Chair of their Executive Board, and was a member of the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee. I also have served on the Wisconsin Election Administration Council since 2003. I provide that information as I will be addressing the importance of voting system certification and the role of the Governmental Accountability Board and staff.

With the process detailed in Wisconsin Statutes and the Wisconsin Administrative Code, no electronic voting equipment may be offered for sale or utilized in Wisconsin unless the Board first approves it. As a member of the Wisconsin Election Administration Council, along with other municipal and county clerks, representatives of the disability community, and advocates for the interests of the voting public, G.A.B. staff has provided vital assistance, details, and technical guidance to the Council to allow a thorough and transparent process for review of potential equipment to be certified by the Board.

There are Voluntary Voting System Guidelines currently accepted for testing and certification by the EAC, which include but are not limited to access to election data, security, accuracy, data integrity, and reliability. However, the important role that state level reviews of voting systems has must be recognized and supported. State level standards and certification provides additional assurances the equipment deployed meets Wisconsin's needs and preferences. In addition, training and specialized knowledge must be maintained to make accurate and appropriate decisions in the certification process to ensure that voters are able to use the most secure and reliable election technology available.

It was acknowledged as a major achievement in 2014 Election Administration that G.A.B. staff actively participates in national efforts to define standards for future voting systems and IT systems used to administer elections in the United States. As a Wisconsin municipal clerk and election official, I am grateful that the G.A.B. is supportive, dedicated, and committed to providing continued administrative guidance and looks to the future for improving the election process for the entire State of Wisconsin.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra L. Wesolowski
Director of Clerk Services/City Clerk
City of Franklin
414-427-7503
swesolowski@franklinwi.gov



CITY OF MARKESAN

150 SOUTH BRIDGE ST. · P.O. BOX 352

MARKESAN, WI 53946

PH: 920-398-3031

FAX: 920-398-3991

January 13, 2015

Senator Robert Cowles and
Representative Samantha Kerkman, Co-Chairs
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707
Sen.Cowles@legis.wisconsin.gov
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles & Representative Kerkman:

I wish to take this opportunity to provide input for your Jan. 14, 2015, public hearing regarding the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk with over 10 years of experience, working for several different municipalities during that time, I wish to express my encouragement of the State's continued support and funding for the Government Accountability Board (GAB).

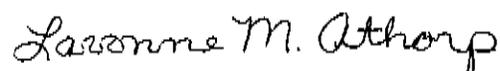
After reviewing the December 2014 Legislative Audit Bureau's Audit Report regarding the GAB for myself, I was disturbed to learn that some members of the State Legislature are using the report's findings to suggest major changes to the structure of the Government Accountability Board. The audit identified several areas for improvement. GAB staff can and should be held accountable for needed improvements in their internal processes. However, it is my belief that in the myriad of duties for which the GAB is responsible, the limited number of areas identified as needing improvement should be seen as a positive, not a negative.

I interact with the GAB on a regular basis, and rely on their support to effectively and properly conduct elections for my municipality. I would like to assure both you and the Joint Legislative Audit Committee that any shortcomings identified in the recent audit are far out-weighted by the professional and effective manner in which GAB staff provide assistance and support to those involved in managing elections throughout the State. Considering the major legislative changes, at both the state and federal level, that have transpired in the last decade, and additional changes that may be forthcoming, any proposed changes to the GAB's structure that would reduce or eliminate positions or funding would have a significant negative impact on elections throughout Wisconsin.

Prior to the current GAB, there was limited consistency in the administration of elections across the State. There was a lack of comprehensive training, and methods and procedures were often individual to the particular Clerk and municipality. The GAB stepped into that void and is an excellent resource for training, common procedures, and assistance in understanding all facets of election management. A significant change to the GAB could move the State backward to a time when voters couldn't know what to expect from election to election, or even polling place to polling place.

I encourage the Joint Legislative Audit Committee to support the GAB with the staff and funding needed so that they can continue to be an excellent resource for election management in Wisconsin and also to improve in the areas that may need it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lavonne M. Athorp".

Lavonne Athorp
City Clerk-Treasurer

From: Renee Hazelton [<mailto:hazelton@mauston.com>]

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2015 12:59 PM

To: Sen.Cowles

Subject: Public Hearing Regarding GAB Performance

Importance: High

Thank you for allowing me an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. I have been a Deputy Clerk for almost 23 years and I also can assure you that I am vested when legislation impacting the different municipalities across the state is being considered. When I first took over the handling of elections, there was not much accountability. I have found working with the Government Accountability Board to be enjoyable and very resourceful. The staff there is very educated, well informed, supportive and professional and most importantly non-partisan. I believe they have done a tremendous job to help keep our elections fair. We all have areas that we can improve upon and this is where I believe the Legislative Audit Bureau's report can help the Government Accountability Board to better the office. I don't believe the audit is meant to disband the Board and doing so in any way is just pure wrong. I would encourage you to please provide support to continue with the current board's function and give them the necessary staffing and funds so that they can improve in the function of what the audit has concluded.

Thank you again for allowing me to voice my concern.

Renee Hazelton, Deputy Clerk-WCMC/CMC

City of Mauston

303 Mansion Street

Mauston, WI 53948

(608)847-6676 Ext. 303

From: Ginny Brost [mailto:vbrost@medfordwi.us]
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2015 3:31 PM
To: Sen.Cowles; Rep.Kerkman
Subject: Public Hearing - GAB Performance

January 12, 2015

Dear Senator Cowles and Representative Kerkman:

As a municipal clerk, I would like to offer my thoughts regarding the Government Accountability Board. When I began my duties as City Clerk, election management had little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training, and no formal procedures. I basically followed what had been done by past Clerks. There was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology, and not much accountability.

The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election administration throughout the State. The election process has grown over the years with more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny. The Government Accountability Board has taken over a very large role in providing guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders, and forms – something I greatly appreciate! Most importantly the Government Accountability Board provides oversight in a fair and consistent manner. Statewide systems and procedures give municipalities the ability to more easily detect voter fraud and abuse across municipal borders. The voter's experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in. In addition, the Government Accountability Board translates legislation into processes and procedures along with supporting material that can be easily accessed through their web site.

The Government Accountability personnel are educated, well-informed, profession, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. I believe they have done a tremendous job, and would encourage you to allow them to continue their work for the electors, candidates, counties, and municipalities across Wisconsin.

The Legislative Audit Bureau's report is a great tool for self-improvement. The report can and should be used to evaluate what is working and what is not; and to implement changes to improve the overall functions of the Government Accountability Board.

Instead of considering to disband the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to support the Government Accountability Board to not only continue their current functions, but provide them with the tools needed to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you.

Ginny Brost, Clerk
City of Medford
639 South Second Street
Medford, WI 54451
Phone: 715-748-1181
Fax: 715-748-1289
Population: 4,350





Menasha
January 13, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board.

I have worked for the City of Menasha in the Clerk's office since 1998 and was appointed Clerk in 2004. Elections are only one part of my job as Clerk. The Government Accountability Board is an excellent resource in helping conduct elections. The GAB provides training for the more than 1800 clerks in the State of Wisconsin. Whether you are a City, Village or Town clerk you receive the same training opportunity. This consistency in training has helped run fair and successful elections in the State of Wisconsin. The GAB has taken on the responsibility of implementing changes in legislation and we all know there have been many changes in legislation pertaining to elections and Campaign Financing recently. The creation of the Government Accountability Board in its current form has been a god sent to me and I'm sure other Wisconsin clerks in keeping election procedures fair and impartial.

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function.

The Legislative Audit Bureau's audit of the GAB mentioned some statutorily required duties that the GAB staff did not complete; this could be due to not having enough staff or financial resources to complete the assignment. I am an office of two, myself and a part-time deputy and there are some things that do not get done because of time and/or funding.

The evaluation conducted on the GAB shows always room for improvements at any level. Don't change the makeup of the GAB; give them more resources to make the necessary improvements.

Thank you again for this opportunity to voice my support of the Government Accountability Board in its current form.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Galeazzi

Deborah A. Galeazzi, WCMC

City of Menasha Clerk
146 Main Street, Menasha, Wisconsin 54952-3151 • (920) 967-3603 • Fax (920) 967-5273



January 13, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Representative Kerkman:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board.

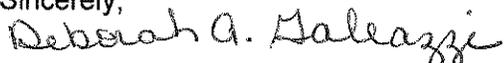
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Thank you again for this opportunity to voice my support of the Government Accountability Board in its current form.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Galeazzi, WCMC
City of Menasha Clerk



5211 SCHLUTER ROAD ■ MONONA, WI 53716-2598
CITY HALL (608) 222-2525
FAX (608) 222-9225
<http://www.mymonona.com>

January 12, 2015

Senator Robert L. Cowles
Room 118 South
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7882

Dear Senator Cowles,

I may not be able to attend the hearing on January 14 regarding the Government Accountability Board audit, but I wanted to express my support for the GAB and the work they do to ensure municipal clerks have the information they need to follow the continually changing election laws.

Clerks are not generally lawyers and don't have law degrees. We need an agency to distill legislation into actionable, understandable processes. The GAB's webinars, communications, trainings, and information sharing is essential to municipal clerk's jobs. We have forged a relationship, where we are all focused on the same goal: fair, accurate, transparent, and most of all, nonpartisan elections.

The GAB is not perfect. But given the complexity of their task, no one could be. Municipal clerks need an agency that is working with them, is responsive to their needs, and provides guidance so that Wisconsin elections continue to be standards of excellence for other states to follow.

Please keep the Government Accountability Board as is, working hard toward this excellence.

Thank you,

Joan Andrusz
City Clerk



JAN 14 2015

5211 SCHLUTER ROAD ■ MONONA, WI 53716-2598
CITY HALL (608) 222-2525
FAX (608) 222-9225
<http://www.mymonona.com>

January 12, 2015

Representative Samantha Kerkman
Room 315 South
State Capitol
Post Office Box 8952
Madison, Wisconsin 53708

Dear Representative Kerkman,

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Please keep the Government Accountability Board as is, working hard toward this excellence.

Thank you,

Joan Andrusz
City Clerk

POLICE DEPARTMENT

5211 Schluter Road
222-0463

COMMUNITY CENTER

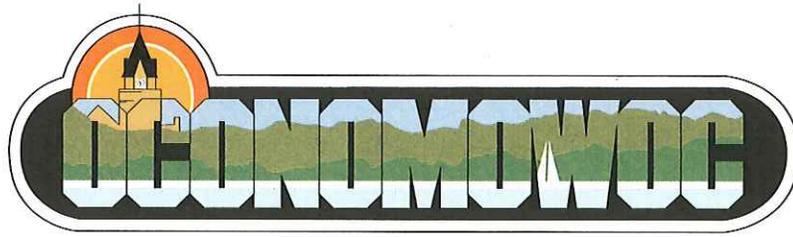
1011 Nichols Road
222-4167

MONONA SENIOR CENTER

1011 Nichols Road
222-3415

FIRE DEPARTMENT

5211 Schluter Road
222-2528



January 12, 2015

Senator Robert Cowles, Co-Chairperson
Representative Samantha Kerkman, Co-Chairperson
Joint Legislative Audit Committee Members

RE: Public Hearing - Audit Report 14-14: GAB

Dear Joint Legislative Audit Committee Co-Chairpersons and Members:

I am writing this letter to offer feedback on my experience with the Government Accountability Board. I am a municipal clerk with 17 years of experience who started in this profession working for a Village and currently a City, and am actively involved in the Wisconsin Municipal Clerk's Association and most recently I Co-Chaired our International Clerk's Conference held in Milwaukee in 2014.

I am a dedicated clerk, who takes my job responsibilities very seriously. I am here to serve the public and in order to serve to the best of my ability, I need to be completely engaged, follow legislation impacting local government and have resources available that I can go to for assistance.

At the beginning of my profession, I was given little in-office training, but was required to attend the Wisconsin Municipal Clerk's Institute (thankfully!). One of my sessions the first year was with the former State Elections Board, which provided me insight on how to run elections. Any and all information I received at the institute was very valuable, and without it I may have not stayed the course, but the SEB itself as a resource back then was fractured.

However, over the years the SEB was transformed into the GAB and went from giving basic assistance to become an excellent resource of election management across the state. The election process has grown tremendously over the years since I started and the GAB has strived, successfully, to be a premier resource for local government, keeping on top of continual legislative changes, all the while being publicly scrutinized and criticized.

It is hard to put a quantifiable value on what the GAB has done for me, but on a scale of 1 – 10 (10 being perfect), I would rate them an 8. They are and have been receptive to constructive criticism and because of that have made many positive changes in how they handle their role in giving much needed support and guidance to local government. Because the GAB is non-partisan, they are able to balance and effectively guide us through all of intricacies of the ever changing election process, which in turn helps us to uphold the integrity of the elections.

174 E Wisconsin Avenue • P.O. Box 27 • Oconomowoc, WI 53066
Phone (262) 569-2186 • www.oconomowoc-wi.gov

I find the staff at the GAB easy to work with, receptive to ideas/suggestions, professional, supportive, and most importantly, always responsive. I am impressed with their transformation over the last 7 years and feel they have done a tremendous job!

I view the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report as a great tool for the self-improvement of the GAB, but using it for any other purpose is wrong. I would encourage that the GAB be provided with the support needed not only to continue their function in its current form, but provide them with the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to weigh in on this very important issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane Coenen, CMC, WCMC
City of Oconomowoc
174 E. Wisconsin Avenue
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
262-569-2175
dcoenen@oconomowoc-wi.gov



205 S. Webster Avenue
Omro, WI 54963
(920) 685-7000

The Honorable Robert Cowles
Wisconsin State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

Dear Senator Cowles and Legislative Audit Committee Members,

On behalf of the election administration for the City of Omro, I would appreciate a few minutes of your time in reviewing this letter addressing concerns with any major changes to the Government Accountability Board as a result of the Legislative Audit Bureau's December 2014 report. As a state certified Clerk-Trainer, I do not recommend any changes to the GAB, only proper funding and staff levels.

As the 2013-2014 President and fifteen year member of the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Association, I traveled all around our state and attended many conferences and training sessions on elections. The GAB sessions are always extremely well attended and appreciated. As clerks, we know what a valuable resource tool they are in providing us with policies and uniform procedures in election administration processes. It is comforting to know that we have such dedicated and knowledgeable support at our fingertips when we are in need of it. Their website is also a tool that I utilize daily for new information and updated changes and forms.

I have conducted the elections in our community since the year 2000. Over those years I have seen a tremendous change in election legislation that has drastically affected how I conduct my local election processes, especially the implementation of SVRS. Each change, many for the better, some not, has resulted in additional unfunded mandates for staff time and expenses related to the election processes for the city. This is staff we do not have. I am it for the clerk staff in our city. What once comprised about 5-10% of my job duties has increased to 35-40% over the last seven years. I do not have the additional staff to assign projects and oversight to. I simply prioritize and put other items on the back burner. I would imagine that the GAB duties have increased accordingly.

I believe that is what the GAB has been doing to maintain, shuffling projects to the back burner based on priority. After reading the entire report, my conclusion is that many of the recommendations would be rectified if adequate staffing and funding were made available to the GAB, especially when new legislative impacts occur. As dedicated election administration employees, the GAB and staff appears to be prioritizing to meet the federal requirements and other initiatives as staffing levels allow, mainly because this is where the majority of their funding to operate is coming from.

Under the Administrative Rules section of the report it quotes: "Because the process for rule promulgation includes legislative approval, rules afford the Legislature an opportunity to help determine how GAB fulfills certain responsibilities. Through September 2014, GAB did not promulgate seven statutorily required administrative rules. Staff indicated promulgation did not occur, in part, because they were busy with other tasks, such as helping to administer recall elections. However, more than eight years have passed since statutes first required six of the seven rules to be promulgated (Bureau, GAB -2014)." I simply ask, how can any understaffed organization maintain current tasks and continuously add new requirements, without also adding the additional funding and staff to accomplish those tasks and requirements. Eventually, something will get left to the wayside in any organization that operates in this manner.

Lack of staffing is also evident under the Staffing Inefficiencies section. " GAB has included requests for additional staff in each of its last three biennial budget requests. In its 2011-13 Biennial Budget Request, it requested to convert 21.00 federally funded project positions into permanent GPR-funded positions, but this request was not included in the Governor's Biennial Budget Proposal. In its 2013-15 Biennial Budget Request, GAB requested six new GPR-funded positions for its Elections Division, but this request was not included in the Governor's Biennial Budget Proposal. In its 2015-17 Biennial Budget Request, GAB requested to convert 22.0 federally funded project positions into permanent federally funded positions, the costs of which GAB's staff indicated can be covered by existing federal revenue until FY 2016-17. Thereafter, another funding source would need to be identified to fund these positions. The Biennial Budget Request indicates that the loss of these 22.0 positions would impair the ability of GAB's staff to fulfill certain statutorily required duties, such as overseeing election administration. For example, all staff who train local election officials are currently in federally funded project position (Bureau, GAB-2014)."

Because the GAB is such an important resource to every clerk across our great state, it is imperative that the state gives them the resources they need to continue to provide support to the election processes throughout Wisconsin. We need to keep this process efficient, consistent, and most importantly non-partisan in nature. The voters of this state are relying on us to do so.

The public hearing on this matter should be a great opportunity for the Legislative Audit Committee to look at the report findings in a positive light, listen intently to the testimony of clerks from across our state, and address the recommendations with the adequate resources needed to make the GAB operate even better than it does today. The State of Wisconsin needs to authorize the staff positions expiring this year and guarantee future funding for the unfilled positions so the GAB can stop trying to preserve the Federal funding, hire necessary staff, and address the report recommendations to get the job done.

I believe eliminating or drastically altering the GAB resource for the clerks and voters in Wisconsin would be detrimental to the integrity of our elections in this state. I would prefer us to keep moving FORWARD not backwards in our election processes.

Regards,



Barbara J. Van Clarke, MMC, WCPC
IIMC -Master Municipal Clerk
Wisconsin Certified Professional Clerk



Works Cited

Bureau, Legislative Audit (2014). *Government Accountability Board*. Madison: State of Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau.



EST. 1851 @
January 12, 2015

City of Onalaska

415 Main Street • Onalaska, WI 54650 • (608) 781-9530 • fax (608) 781-9534
www.cityofonalaska.com

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

I would like to take the time to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board (GAB). I have been a City Clerk for 14 years and have always held the GAB in very high regard. They have assisted me with any issues that have arisen with any election during my entire 14 years.

I started with the State Election Board, which transformed into the GAB. Throughout the years there has been nothing but improvement in all processes, assistance, procedures, training and uniformity. The GAB has gone through numerous changes with the election law in just the past few years and assisted us every step of the way to ensure fair elections throughout the State of Wisconsin.

The GAB has been an excellent resource for clerks throughout the state. They have improved their training from traveling all over the state to utilizing webinars, a big step to revamp their entire training module. The staff at GAB is also educated, professional, supportive and non-partisan in carrying out their duties. They have been there for support of any candidate or issue, no matter what party may be affiliated.

The Legislative Audit Bureau's (LAB) exceptions report should be used as a tool to assist the GAB to make further improvements, not to tear them down. Evaluating anyone or anything is a great idea and will only assist in better processes as the end result. The State of Wisconsin is already admired and respected for the accuracy and professionalism of their elections. To disband the organization that is responsible for the prestige we have earned seems ludicrous.

Please use the LAB to find the areas that need improvement and provide the funds to improve the areas that are warranted. We all have weaknesses that need improvement and I think this report will enable you to find the areas that could use improvement.

Thank you for allowing me to provide you with this input.

Sincerely,

Caroline L. Burmaster, MMC / WCPC
City Clerk, City of Onalaska

CITY OF PORTAGE

115 West Pleasant Street
Portage, Wisconsin 53901
Telephone: (608) 742-2176 • Fax: (608) 742-8623



"Where the North Begins"

January 13, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.cowles@legis.wi.gov

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

Re: Public Hearing regarding Government Accountability Board

Dear Senator Cowles and Representative Kerkman:

Thank you for providing me an opportunity to comment on the Government Accountability Board (GAB). Throughout my 26 years as a municipal clerk, the election process has become more and more complex. With increasingly more legislation and public scrutiny, GAB is a valuable resource for election management for municipal clerks throughout the state. GAB has created standard procedures and forms to ensure that elections are being consistently, fairly and impartially administered throughout the state. GAB also provides essential training and guidance for local election officials, which is so important in fulfilling our role as election administrators.

In closing, I would respectfully request that GAB be allowed to continue as a valued resource for local election officials.

Sincerely,

Marie A. Moe
Marie A. Moe, WCPC, MMC
City Clerk

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER
Office of the City Clerk / Treasurer
450 S. Main Street
Richland Center, WI 53581
Phone: 608-647-3466

January 13, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk with over 21 years of experience working for the City of Richland Center, I can assure you I am vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel I must speak up.

When I first began my duties in local government, election management was handled with little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training, methods and procedures were home grown and there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and frankly not much accountability.

The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism. The GAB has thankfully taken on a very large role in providing guidance,

support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders and forms. Most importantly, the GAB provides oversight to keep elections in Wisconsin fair! Statewide systems and procedures from the GAB gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud and abuse across municipal borders much easier; voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in; and translating legislation into process and procedures is done superbly! The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. Frankly, I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their fine work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Melinda D. Jones
City Clerk

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER
Office of the City Clerk / Treasurer
450 S. Main Street
Richland Center, WI 53581
Phone: 608-647-3466

January 13, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

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Sincerely,

Melinda D. Jones
City Clerk



CITY OF RIPON

100 Jackson Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971-1396

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

Re: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk with 18 years of experience working with the City of Ripon, I am vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel I must speak up.

When I first began my duties in local government, election management was handled with little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training methods and procedures were home grown and there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and not much accountability.

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The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their great work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin.

With regard to the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report, this is a great tool for self improvement. Respectfully, there is no-one who can say they have no room for improvement. We all have room and should strive for it by assessing what went well and working towards improvement in those areas that did not. The Legislative Audit Bureau's audit is meant for that purpose and using it for any other agenda is wrong.

Instead of considering to disband the GAB, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but to provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann E Schommer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ann" and last name "Schommer" clearly distinguishable.

Ann E Schommer, MMC, WCPC
City Clerk, City of Ripon



CITY OF RIPON

100 Jackson Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971-1396

JAN 14 2015

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov

Re: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Representative Kerkman:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal clerk with 18 years of experience working with the City of Ripon, I am vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel I must speak up.

When I first began my duties in local government, election management was handled with little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training methods and procedures were home grown and there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and not much accountability.

The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism. The GAB has thankfully taken on a very large role in providing guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders and forms. Most importantly, the GAB provides oversight to keep elections in Wisconsin fair. Statewide systems and procedures from the GAB gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud and abuse across municipal borders much easier; voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in; and translating legislation into process and procedures is done superbly.

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their great work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin.

With regard to the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report, this is a great tool for self improvement. Respectfully, there is no-one who can say they have no room for improvement. We all have room and should strive for it by assessing what went well and working towards improvement in those areas that did not. The Legislative Audit Bureau's audit is meant for that purpose and using it for any other agenda is wrong.

Instead of considering to disband the GAB, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but to provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann E Schommer". The signature is fluid and connected, with a large initial "A" and "S".

Ann E Schommer, MMC, WCPC
City Clerk, City of Ripon

January 12, 2015

Senator Robert Cowles
P. O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wisconsin.gov

RE: GAB Performance Public Hearing

Dear Senator Cowles:

I am writing to express my thoughts on the Government Accountability Board. I have been a municipal clerk/treasurer for over 25 years and have had the responsibility of conducting numerous elections. Before the GAB election management was handled with very little oversight from anyone. There was lack of coordination, no comprehensive training and election procedures differed from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and not much accountability.

GAB has taken on a great task of improving election procedures and they have done a tremendous job. The education and training they are providing the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks is enabling us to conduct elections fairly, with continuity statewide and with accountability. The staff at GAB is user-friendly. They are easy to access and enthusiastic. Above all, they are non-partisan in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

The Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report should be used as a resource to improve and strengthen the GAB. Please do not disband the Government Accountability Board. I encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to continue their function and also provide the necessary staffing and funds to improve their operation.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Garsow, WCPC, MMC, CMTW
City of Seymour Clerk/Treasurer

January 12, 2015

Representative Kerkman
P. O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov

RE: GAB Performance Public Hearing

Dear Representative Kerkman:

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Thank you for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Garsow, WCPC, MMC, CMTW
City of Seymour Clerk/Treasurer

From: julie hanson [<mailto:clerk@spartawisconsin.org>]
Sent: Friday, January 09, 2015 11:54 AM
To: Sen.Cowles
Subject: Audit of GAB

Honorable Robert Cowles:

I understand that there is going to be a public hearing next week regarding the GAB. I've only been a Clerk since 2011, and the GAB has been a HUGE help to me. They have been invited to speak at various Clerk functions and have always been very helpful and knowledgeable. If I have any questions on elections, inputting items in SVRS or any other questions, they are always very helpful and find the answer for me. The manuals they put out are helpful and the webinars they offer are so valuable.

I can't think of any changes that would make them any better than they already are. I couldn't do my job efficiently if I couldn't reach them when needed.
Thank you for your time.

Julie Hanson
City Clerk
201 W. Oak Street
Sparta, WI 54656
608-269-4340, ext. 221
clerk@spartawisconsin.org

From: julie hanson [mailto:clerk@spartawisconsin.org]
Sent: Friday, January 09, 2015 11:59 AM
To: Rep.Kerkman
Subject: Audit of GAB

Honorable Samantha Kerkman:

I understand that there is going to be a public hearing next week regarding the GAB.

I've only been a Clerk since 2011, and the GAB has been a HUGE help to me. They have been invited to speak at various Clerk functions and have always been very helpful and knowledgeable.

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Thank you for your time.

Julie Hanson
City Clerk
201 W. Oak Street
Sparta, WI 54656
608-269-4340, ext. 221
clerk@spartawisconsin.org

City of Spooner

"Crossroads of the North"

515 North Summit Street P.O. Box 548 Spooner, Wis. 54801-0548 (715) 635-8769 Fax (715) 635-9319

Debra J. Koehn

City Clerk – Treasurer

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear The Honorable Samantha Kerkman:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my comments on the Government Accountability Board (GAB) and the upcoming hearing regarding the GAB.

The GAB has been a remarkable source of information, training, guidance, reminders and support for the clerks of Wisconsin. They are consistent, well informed and professional in all aspects of their jobs. I could only wish other Departments within the State were so easy to work with!

I have worked in my municipality for over 20 years with the last 6 years as clerk. Moving into the clerk's position can be daunting and the position was given to me a week before a presidential election. The GAB has been there for me since the beginning with the education, manuals and training necessary. They provide training opportunities for my election staff, the office staff and the clerks, in all the various facets of the election process.

I believe they have been doing a tremendous job and would like to see them continue to be supported by the State of Wisconsin through funding and necessary staffing to do their jobs correctly.

When reading the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report, it appears there was no room for comments on the great changes they have already provided for the voters of Wisconsin since their inception. If anyone has ever worked anywhere, in any situation, there is always room for improvement, but to consider disbanding the department is just not right!

It is my intention today to ask you NOT to consider disbanding the Governmental Accountability Board, but instead give them the necessary tools to make their department even better.

Thank you for your time,

Debbie Koehn
City of Spooner Clerk/Treasurer



City of St. Francis

Jean M. DeMores, WCPC/CMC
DEPUTY CITY CLERK/TREASURER
Jean.DeMores@stfranwi.org

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend this public hearing. However, I would like to take this opportunity to share some of my thoughts with you. I have worked in local government for 18 years and have been involved in the Election process throughout it all.

When I first started working with elections, each municipality chose their own election software or did it manually; little municipalities did not even use voter registration; and there was not statewide organization of elections. We all did what we believed we were to do but interpretation can vary from municipality to municipality. There was no consistency between processes from one municipality to another nor comprehensive training.

The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and more criticism and scrutiny from the public. Thankfully, the GAB has taken on a very large role in providing guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders, and forms. Most importantly, they provide the oversight to keep elections fair in Wisconsin. Statewide systems and procedures from GAB gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud and abuse across municipal borders much easier; voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in; and translating legislation into process and procedures is done superbly.

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. I believe they are doing a fantastic job and would urge you to allow them to continue their fine work for the electors, candidates, counties, and municipalities across Wisconsin.

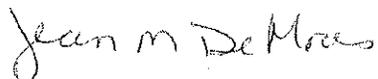
The Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report is a great tool for self-improvement and who does not have room for some type of improvement, either as an individual, a business, or government. The report should be used for this purpose and not for some other agenda.

I would urge you to support the Government Accountability Board with the staff and funds required to do the job they have been directed to do. The GAB implements and helps municipalities apply the laws that the Legislative Body has created.

I would urge you to support the Government Accountability Board with the staff and funds required to do the job they have been directed to do. The GAB implements and helps municipalities apply the laws that the Legislative Body has created.

Thank you for letting me share some thoughts with you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean D. DeMores". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jean D. DeMores, WCPC/CMC
Deputy City Clerk/Treasurer



City of St. Francis

Jean M. DeMores, WCPC/CMC
DEPUTY CITY CLERK/TREASURER
Jean.DeMores@stfranwi.org

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
Room 315 North
State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53707
Rep.kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

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I would urge you to support the Government Accountability Board with the staff and funds required to do the job they have been directed to do. The GAB implements and helps municipalities apply the laws that the Legislative Body has created.

Thank you for letting me share some thoughts with you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jean D. DeMores". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'D'.

Jean D. DeMores, WCPC/CMC
Deputy City Clerk/Treasurer

Gateway to Cranberry Country

The City of Tomah

WHERE THE I DIVIDES

819 Superior Avenue
Tomah, Wisconsin 54660
Phone: (608) 374-7420
Fax: (608) 374-7424

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

The Honorable Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles and Representative Kerkman:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback regarding the Government Accountability Board as I will be unable to attend the Hearing on January 14th in person. As a municipal clerk with over 20 years of experience, I can assure you I have seen a lot of changes from legislation that impacts municipalities; many of which are related to the Election process. When I started as Clerk in 1994, the Election Day Manual for Wisconsin Election Officials was 33 pages in length. Today, the same manual consists of 248 pages and describes in detail a standardized method of conducting Elections in the State of Wisconsin. Based on the 33 page manual, it is quite apparent that there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide data base, no audits, little technology and not much accountability. The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown tremendously over the years with more and more legislation and at times, changes are made with minimal time frames between the change and the Election itself. This creates much confusion among the 1800 + clerks that are responsible for overseeing Election Day Operations; especially when legislation occurs that changes things multiple times shortly before Election Day.

Page 2

The Honorable Robert Cowles, State Senator
The Honorable Samantha Kerkman, State Representative

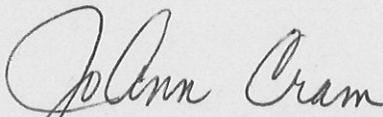
The GAB has been an extremely reliable and valuable source in providing guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices, reminders and forms. Most importantly, the GAB provides oversight to keep elections in Wisconsin fair! Statewide systems and procedures from the GAB gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud and abuse much easier; voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in; and translating legislation into process and procedures is done superbly!

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. They have done a tremendous job and I would encourage you to allow them to continue their fine work for the electors, candidates, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin. Clerks rely on their expertise and we are very thankful to have the support available from GAB staff when we need it. It is very concerning to hear of the possibility of this wonderful asset to clerks being disbanded.

When you look at all the changes that have occurred over the years and all the work that goes into those changes, because it is substantial, the staff at GAB has done an outstanding job of keeping up with it all in a fair and impartial manner. Instead of considering to disband the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Sincerely,



JoAnn Cram, WCPC/CMC
City Clerk,
City Of Tomah

cc: City Administrator Roger Gorius
Members of the Common Council

Council Manager Government Since 1924



Office of City Clerk
1717 East Park Street
Post Office Box 87
Two Rivers WI 54241-0087
Telephone 920/793-5526
FAX 920/793-5512

January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
Post Office Box 7882
Madison WI 53707-7882

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

As the Municipal Clerk for the City of Two Rivers, I feel that I must send you feedback on the Government Accountability Board.

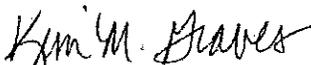
The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism. Thank the Lord for the GAB! They have provided us guidance, support, training, education, common procedures, manuals, notices and forms to keep the elections in Wisconsin fair. Statewide systems and procedures gives municipalities the ability to detect voter fraud (if any) much easier and voter experience is consistent no matter what community an elector lives in.

The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. They have done an outstanding job and I am encouraging you to allow them to continue their mission for the good of the State of Wisconsin.

I am encouraging you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve those areas that need it.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,
CITY OF TWO RIVERS


Kim M. Graves
City Clerk



January 12, 2015

The Honorable Robert Cowles
State Senator
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Sen.Cowles@legis.wi.gov

RE: Public Hearing re: GAB Performance

Dear Senator Cowles:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give you feedback on the recent Legislative Audit Bureau's Exceptions Report regarding the Government Accountability Board. As a municipal deputy clerk with over 15 years of experience I can assure you I am vested when legislation impacting municipalities is considered. This being one of those times, I feel I must speak up.

When I first began my duties in local government, election management was handled with little to no oversight from anyone. There was a lack of coordination, no comprehensive training, methods and procedures were home grown, there was little to no consistency between processes from one municipality to another. There was no statewide database, no audits, very little technology and frankly not much accountability.

The Government Accountability Board has proven to be an excellent resource for the improvement of election management across the state. The election process has grown over the years with more and more legislation and an incredible amount of public scrutiny and criticism.

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The staff at the GAB is educated, well informed, professional, supportive, and most importantly non-partisan in carrying out their function. Frankly, I believe they have done a tremendous job and would encourage you to allow them to continue their exceptional work for the electors, candidates, counties, and municipalities throughout Wisconsin.



City of Waupaca, Wisconsin

City Administrator/Clerk's Office

Ph: 715-258-4411

Fax: 715-258-4426

<http://www.cityofwaupaca.org>

With regard to the Legislative Audit Bureau's exceptions report. This is a great tool for self-improvement! Respectfully, there is no individual, business, government agency or legislator who can say they have no room for improvement. We all have room and should strive daily for it by assessing what went well and working towards the betterment in those areas that did not. The LAB audit is meant for that purpose and using it for any other agenda is just wrong.

Instead of considering disbanding the Government Accountability Board, I would encourage you to provide the support needed for the GAB to not only continue their function in its current form, but provide them the necessary staffing and funds to improve in those areas that need it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to be heard.

Sincerely,

Sandy M Stiebs

Sandy M. Stiebs, CMC/WCMC
Deputy Clerk