



STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BOARD ON AGING AND LONG TERM CARE

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Heather A. Bruemmer

14 Nov 2013

Members of the Wisconsin Assembly  
State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative;

The Board on Aging and Long Term Care, an agency of Wisconsin State Government charged by statute to advocate for the rights and interests of elder Wisconsinites who reside in long term care facilities, wishes to respectfully register our strong opposition to AB 396.

It is our contention that many of the residents of long term care facilities, particularly those living in community-based residential facilities, residential care apartment complexes and adult family homes will very likely be deprived of their effective right to participate in the electoral process by passage of this bill. For as long as this agency has been advocating for Wisconsin's long term care facility residents, we have consistently heard and felt the value which these citizens place on their right and duty to vote. These citizens, many of whom are members of "the Greatest Generation," have voted all their lives and may now be forced by circumstance to sit idly by and watch others exercise the franchise rights which they have cherished for all these years.

The right to vote by absentee mail ballot, which appears also to be somewhat limited by this bill, may remain an option, but many seniors fear that mailed absentee ballots are, somehow, not the same as voting in person. Dropping a ballot in a box may not mean as much to younger generations who have become accustomed to voting on a touch-screen voting machine or with a "ballot scanning device," but the act of marking your choice on a ballot and handing it to a real person or placing it in a ballot box is hugely significant to our elders.

If anything, Wisconsin should be making an effort to expand the opportunities for our seniors who live in these facilities to vote, not only in local and statewide elections, but in national contests, as well.

Again, on behalf of elder Wisconsinites, the Board on Aging and Long Term Care is opposed to AB 396.

Please feel free to contact either Heather A. Bruemmer (608 246.7014) or Bill Donaldson (608 246.7018) if you have questions.

Thank you for your kind attention.

On behalf and with the consent of:  
Heather A. Bruemmer  
Executive Director

William P. Donaldson  
Counsel to the Board