



# JANEL BRANDTJEN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 22<sup>ND</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Thank you Chairwoman Bernier and the entire Campaigns and Elections Committee for holding this hearing regarding AB 637.

Over the past several months, I have worked with several county, city, and village clerks, as well as the Elections Commission, in an effort to increase voter integrity and implement cost-saving measures for local governments across the state.

The final product is an **optional** direct voting process that allows voters to cast their in-person absentee ballot directly into the voting machine. This will reduce the need for municipal clerks to hire additional poll workers to feed voting machines with absentee ballots on Election Day.

The amount of people engaging in in-person absentee voting has doubled, or even tripled, in the past few years. On Election Day, many local municipalities hire dozens of additional poll workers to submit absentee ballots into the voting machine to meet their deadline. Many ballots are rejected by electronic voting machines because they are made out incorrectly and poll workers have to remake ballots for voters who are not there to confirm their intent.

The result of this is an increasing cost to hire more poll workers. In addition, these poll workers usually work longer schedules on Election Day to deal with the ever-increasing absentee ballots. For municipalities who wish to implement this process, there is the potential for large cost savings.

Second, under the current system, if you vote in-person absentee, your ballot is sealed in an envelope and stored away until Election Day. This bill allows municipalities to adopt a policy that allows the ballot to be put directly into the voting machine by the voter, thus increasing voter integrity. Voters feel comfortable feeding their own ballot into the machine and know it will be counted. Additional measures to ensure ballot bags are tagged and initialed, as well providing number of votes online, is provided in the bill. With these measures, both security and transparency will be increased.

This bill has several measures in place that ensure all ballots are treated equally, ensuring every Wisconsinite has an equal vote. The total number of absentee ballots are counted each day but the vote count is not tabulated and reported until the polls close on Election Day.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janel Brandtjen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

State Representative Janel Brandtjen



# DAVID CRAIG

STATE SENATOR

Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections  
Public Hearing, November 28, 2017  
Assembly Bill 637  
Senator David Craig, 28<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Chairman Bernier and Committee Members,

Thank you for taking testimony on Assembly Bill 637 regarding the use of an electronic voting machine to cast a vote with an in-person absentee ballot.

Several of the municipal, town and village clerks I represent in the 28<sup>th</sup> Senate District requested the legislation before you. They see the increasing demand by citizens wanting to vote in-person absentee. In addition, voters feel reassured that their vote is counted when they physically feed their ballot into the voting machine.

Currently, in-person absentee votes are sealed in an envelope and only opened and counted after voting has occurred on Election Day. The current process can be cumbersome if there are several thousand absentee ballots and even worse if those ballots have errors that need to be corrected by poll workers to confirm the voter's intent. Much of this work is being done late into the night and early morning with some poll workers working longer than ten hour shifts, thus increasing the risk of errors and/or miscounted ballots.

AB 637 also has a significant cost savings mechanism for many of the large municipalities in the state. In recent history, additional poll workers have to be hired the day of the election to count more and more absentee votes. AB 637 allows absentee votes to be counted prior to Election Day and does not leave this work to be done at the last minute.

I want to thank to Representatives Brandtjen and Bernier for their diligent work on this matter and I look forward to this election reform becoming law. Thank you for allowing my testimony on this election reform.

# **Testimony of Michael Haas**

**Interim Administrator**

**Wisconsin Elections Commission**

**Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections**

**November 28, 2017**

**Room 300 Northeast, State Capitol**

**Public Hearing**

**Assembly Bill 637**

Chairperson Bernier and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Assembly Bill 637. We appreciate that the author and the clerks supporting the bill have involved our staff in the conversation as the bill has been developed and invited our feedback. While there is broad agreement that it is a challenge for some municipalities to process all absentee ballots on Election Day for high turnout elections, permitting municipalities to use voting equipment in the clerk's office before Election Day has a ripple effect on other processes and is not as simple of a solution as it might first appear.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission discussed this bill at its meeting in September but has not taken a position on it due to the significant policy decisions and implementation issues involved. Therefore, I am testifying for information purposes to highlight significant policy changes contained in the bill as well as administrative issues which our staff believes have not been fully resolved.

## Uniformity

Before addressing specific provisions of the bill, I would note a general issue which may be worth some legal research in advance. That is the question of whether the proposed alternative process for casting an absentee ballot might create inconsistencies in the treatment of ballots and voters in different municipalities to such an extent that it might invite legal challenges as to its constitutionality.

Statutes are presumed to be constitutional, of course, and the Legislature has wide latitude in making policy decisions. But the bill creates several significant differences in the treatment of ballots and voters, and those differences would be due to the discretion of a municipal governing body rather than the voter's choice of voting method. Seeing or hearing of voters in a neighboring municipality using voting equipment when voting in the clerk's office may not only create some voter confusion, but some of the changes in the process described below

may also prompt legal concerns regarding the uniformity of the voting process throughout the State.

### Significant Policy and Procedural Changes

Under current law all absentee ballots are returned by the voter in a certificate envelope signed by the voter and a witness. When the ballot is voted in the clerk's office, the clerk signs as the witness. If either signature is missing, the ballot is sent to the polling place with instructions for the election inspectors to reject the ballot. At the polling place, inspectors separate properly completed envelopes from their ballots, issue voter numbers and announce the voter's name before depositing the ballot into the voting equipment or ballot box. Any challenge to the ballot is made at the polling place when the voter's name is read.

In municipalities which adopt the alternative process of AB 637, absentee ballots submitted by mail would still follow the process of being returned in a certificate envelope. But absentee ballots completed in the clerk's office would be deposited immediately into the voting equipment as they are at the polls on Election Day, without the use of a certificate envelope.

In these municipalities, in-person absentee voters would be able to immediately see whether the voting equipment detected errors such as overvotes or crossover votes, and to cast a corrected ballot if an error was made. Those voters would not be permitted to spoil their ballot and request a new one after voting. In contrast, voters submitting an absentee ballot by mail in the same community, and all absentee voters in communities not adopting the AB 637 process, would still have the option to spoil their ballot and request a new one in a timely manner, but would not have the same assurance that their ballot was able to be counted by the voting equipment prior to Election Day.

While the voter using voting equipment in the clerk's office would benefit from knowing immediately whether the ballot will be counted, that benefit will be restricted to specific municipalities that qualify for and also choose the alternative process. The in-person absentee voting process used, and the associated rights and consequences, would be determined by the majority vote of individual municipal governing bodies. In addition, the bill would also restrict the opportunity to use the alternative process to municipalities which have purchased newer voting equipment that includes the functionality to tabulate write-in votes, and that the Elections Commission determines to be prepared to implement the new procedures.

Elections Commission staff has identified several other significant policy and procedural changes to current law which the Legislature should be aware of, including the following:

1. The bill creates Subchapter VI in Chapter 6 to establish the administration of the alternative absentee voting process. These provisions would exist outside of Subchapter IV which contains the main statutes related to absentee voting. For the most part, the bill includes appropriate cross references to incorporate relevant sections. But it does not incorporate the guiding legal principles of interpretation described in Section 6.84, specifically that absentee voting is a privilege rather than a

right, and that the absentee ballot processes shall be construed as mandatory. These principles inform the administration of absentee voting processes and have been cited in court decisions interpreting absentee voting statutes. Their omission from Subchapter VI may create some doubt as to whether the alternative absentee voting process should be applied and considered by courts within the traditional legal framework.

2. The bill shifts the responsibility of processing in-person absentee ballots from election inspectors to municipal clerks and their staffs. This would involve new training and procedures for both clerks and for inspectors. In addition, because the major political parties have a statutory right to nominate individuals to serve as election inspectors, this seems to represent a policy change related to the respective roles of local election officials as much as an administrative change.
3. For county clerks that program voting equipment, Section 6.982(2) would require the county clerk to schedule the programming at an earlier date as determined by municipalities which choose to conduct the alternate process. This may force counties to program voting equipment on an expedited schedule for all municipalities regardless of how many use the alternate process. Ensuring that the voting equipment is available for use at least 15 days before Election Day may also create time pressures to program the equipment, especially between the Spring Primary and Spring Election. It would also lengthen the time period between equipment programming and Election Day during which the programmed voting equipment needs to be secured. While the bill permits the alternative absentee process for a two-week period, the outcome of the pending *One Wisconsin Institute* litigation could require expanding that time window.
4. Currently, all absentee ballots are secured by municipal clerks and transported to the polling place for processing on Election Day. This permits observers to see the processing of all absentee ballots and to hear the names of voters when they are announced. Wis. Stat. Section 6.982(6)(a) would require clerks to retain the in-person absentee ballots and transmit all other absentee ballots to the polling place for processing. This may affect perceptions related to transparency of the process, particularly regarding write-in votes, and also requires different processes for different absentee ballots.
5. Similarly, the challenge process would be modified under Section 6.982(8). Challenges related to in-person absentee voters would be initiated at the clerk's office, meaning that potential challengers would need to attend voting hours for up to two weeks rather than only on Election Day. Any challenges made at the clerk's office would require the clerk to send the ballot to the polling place where the challenge would be resolved. Challenges to absentee ballots submitted by mail or through Special Voting Deputies would still be initiated at the polling place.
6. The bill adds a new requirement for voting equipment to be approved for use in Wisconsin, specifically that it include a write-in report functionality. This would be

true even for voting equipment to be used by municipalities that do not adopt the alternate absentee voting process. It could also potentially limit the variety of voting systems approved for use in Wisconsin if the equipment does not include the write-in report functionality or it does not comply with the statutory sections governing the tallying of write-in votes. Currently, Wis. Stat. Section 5.85(2)(a) requires election officials to examine ballots for write-in votes and to count and tabulate the write-in votes. AB 637 does not alter this provision, meaning either there would be a conflict in the statutes related to tallying write-in votes using the alternate process, or write-in votes would be processed differently depending upon the method that the ballot is cast and the municipality of the voter.

7. Under current law, if a clerk becomes aware that a voter has died after submitting an absentee ballot, the ballot is identified using the certificate envelope and is rejected. In some cases the fact of the voter's death does not become known until after the official canvass, but the rule is the same for all ballots. Under AB 637, because in-person absentee voters would immediately insert their ballots into the voting equipment, it would be impossible to identify the ballot of such a voter who subsequently dies before Election Day, and therefore the ballot would presumably be counted. However, the current rule would remain for voters in the same municipality who return absentee voters by mail or via Special Voting Deputies, and for all absentee voters in municipalities which do not adopt the alternate voting process. Depending upon the outcome of the *One Wisconsin Institute* case, it is also possible that a ballot could be counted for a voter who dies a month or more before Election Day.

#### Outstanding Administrative Issues

Elections Commission staff has also identified several administrative and technical issues that should be considered or remain unresolved in the current draft of AB 637, including the following:

1. Commission staff has not confirmed that the write-in report functionalities of existing voting systems properly tally write-in votes according to the specific requirements of Wis. Stat. Section 7.50, as would be required under Section 3 of the bill. There may be situations in which the write-in report functionality tallies votes improperly and in ways that are inconsistent with the tally of write-in votes tabulated by election inspectors' visual review.
2. In the newly-created Section 6.981 of the bill, there may be ambiguity in the language stating that clerks shall "allow" the use of the alternate process if the governing body adopts an ordinance or resolution to "allow" such voting. The provision could be read to require the alternative process if all of the conditions are met, or to allow both the current and alternative method of in-person absentee voting. If the latter interpretation is intended, even in-person absentee voters in the same municipality may use different procedures, some using voting equipment and others using certificate envelopes.

3. Section 6.982(1)(c) would state that the municipal clerk shall reconcile the number of ballots cast each day with the number of ballots issued each day using the alternative process. If those numbers do not match, the bill requires that reconciliation shall be completed as outlined in current Statutes. The bill does not clarify certain details, however, such as whether the reconciliation shall include ballots only for the specific day involved or all ballots cast with the alternative process, and whether the reconciliation is to be performed by the clerk or the local board of canvassers at the polling place.
4. Wis. Stat. Section 6.982(4) would require the Elections Commission to program the statewide voter registration system so that ballots issued during the alternative absentee voting process are tracked by sequentially numbering the absentee ballot certification and request log. Commission staff has not evaluated the feasibility or expense of making any required changes to the voter registration system. In addition, adding such functionalities may create confusion for other clerks using the system whose municipalities do not adopt the alternative process.
5. While Section 6.982(8) would permit challenges to be made during in-person absentee voting, there is no requirement that voters state their name during that process as they do at the polling place. Potential challengers would have no opportunity to hear the voter's name in order to determine whether a challenge should be initiated.
6. Wis. Stat. Section 6.982(9) would require the Elections Commission to establish procedures for certifying municipalities to use the alternative absentee voting process. This provision also requires the Commission to certify municipalities to use the alternative process if it determines that the municipality "is capable of adequately securing all equipment and ballots consistent with this subchapter and of satisfying all other requirements set forth in this subchapter." This general language omits specific standards and requirements which the Commission can objectively implement and evaluate to determine whether a municipality is capable of and prepared to implement the alternative process. For instance, it is unclear whether the Commission would be responsible for evaluating the number and expertise of municipal staff in addition to the voting equipment available for the process.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts with you. I hope this testimony will help inform the Legislature's consideration of this bill. As always, we would be glad to answer questions and work with you to address any questions or issues related to the bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Haas  
Interim Administrator  
Wisconsin Elections Commission  
608-266-8005/[Michael.haas@wi.gov](mailto:Michael.haas@wi.gov)



CITY OF WAUWATOSA  
MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER  
7725 WEST NORTH AVENUE  
WAUWATOSA, WI 53213  
Telephone: (414) 479-8917  
Fax: (414) 479-8989

November 27, 2017

Committee on Campaigns and Elections  
State Capitol  
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Committee Members:

I am Carla Ledesma, the Wauwatosa City Clerk since 1998. Having been in my position for 19 years has allowed me to experience firsthand the extent of the changes in the voting habits of Wauwatosa's 31,000-plus registered voters. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today and voice my support for the passage of Assembly Bill 637.

The emphasis on absentee voting by candidates and political parties, coupled with changes in State law, have led to a tremendous increase in absentee voting. Prior to 2000, only about 7% of Wauwatosa's electors cast absentee ballots. For the 2016 General Election, however, this figure swelled to more than 30% of registered voters (nearly 11,000). More than *two-thirds* of that number – or about 8,400 – opted to vote in person at the Clerk's office. Managing the in-person absentee voting process has become increasingly challenging – and expensive.

Allowing voters to use tabulators during in-person absentee voting is much needed! Voting habits have changed; State laws governing in-person absentee voting must evolve to accommodate the increasing number of 21<sup>st</sup> century voters who opt to vote by absentee ballot..

- Enabling in-person absentee voters to feed their ballots directly into a tabulator each day assures the voters that if they make a mistake in completing their ballots, they can immediately re-cast a corrected ballot. There is no chance of their absentee ballots being rejected because poll workers could not determine voter intent.
- Processing absentee ballots on Election Day – whether at the polls or at a central count location – will be completed much more quickly. End-of-night results won't be delayed because absentee ballots have still not been counted.
- The use of tabulators for in-person absentee voting will measurably reduce costs for municipalities. There will be a significant reduction in the use of absentee ballot envelopes, and in the need to hire additional personnel to sort and file absentee ballots in preparation for Election Day. (Absentee ballots are handled six times on average before being counted on Election Day)



Committee on Campaign and Elections  
November 27, 2017  
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Wauwatosa used over 720 person-hours, at a cost of \$11/hour, during the three weeks prior to the 2016 General Election. (Cost: \$7,920). On Election Day itself, another 288 person hours were used to count nearly 11,000 absentee ballots, again at a cost of \$11/hour (\$3,170). When compared to the City's overall budget, these are small amounts. However, with today's tight budgets, it can be the difference between a needed service being budgeted or not.

Please support passage of Assembly Bill 637. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Carla A. Ledesma, CMC  
City Clerk

/cal

COUNTY CLERK

# BROWN COUNTY

305 E. WALNUT STREET, ROOM 120  
P.O. BOX 23600  
GREEN BAY, WI 54305-3600

SANDRA L. JUNO  
COUNTY CLERK

PHONE (920) 448-4016 FAX (920) 448-4498

juno\_sl@co.brown.wi.us

Nov. 28, 2017

## Committee on Campaigns and Elections

### ALTERNATE OPTIONS FOR ABSENTEE VOTING

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Statutes were changed allowing any eligible elector to vote by absentee ballot beginning with the 2000 Presidential Election. Previously, absentee voting was limited to electors over 70 years old, people with disabilities, and electors that would be out of town on Election Day.

WHEREAS, this change has effected a 1,000% increase in the number of absentee ballots cast in Brown County over the past decade; the 2000 Presidential Election had less than 4,000 absentee ballots cast and the 2016 Presidential Election had nearly 45,000 absentee ballots cast.

WHEREAS, for the 2016 Presidential Election about 30,000 (75%) of the absentee ballots cast for the 2016 Presidential Election were voted in person in municipal clerks' offices.

WHEREAS, increasing numbers of electors are choosing to vote by absentee ballot due to increased media attention, political rallies, and direct mail and phone communications from candidates, political parties, and interest groups in an effort to "bank votes" prior to Election Day.

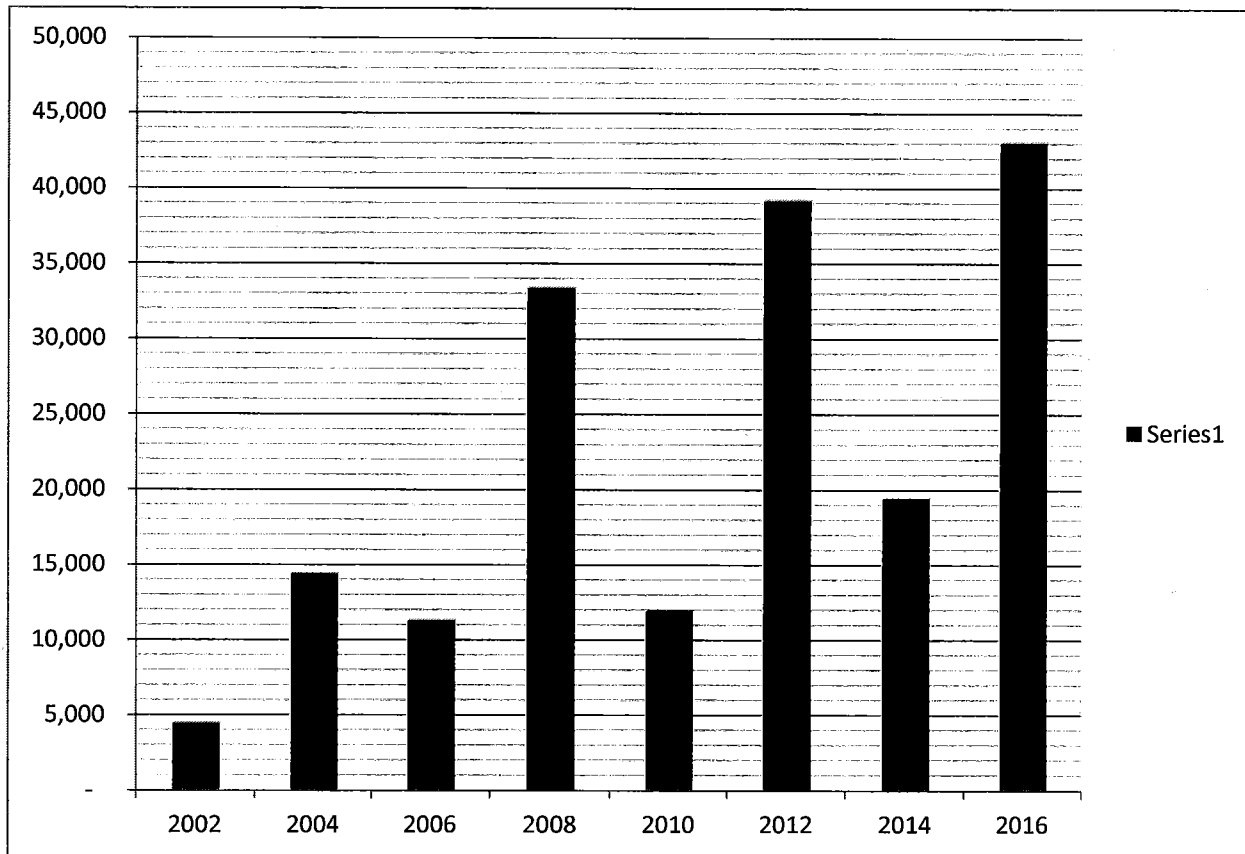
WHEREAS, current absentee voting laws negatively restricts the ability of municipal clerks for large populations to efficiently manage high volumes of electors voting in their offices and the overall management of processing absentee ballots prior to and on Election Day.

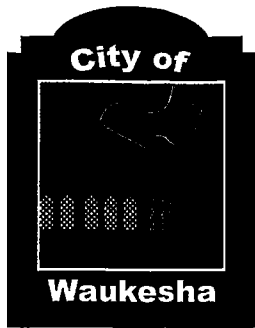
WHEREAS, several municipal and county clerks have been working with legislators and the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) to create legislation for an optional alternative Absentee Voting Efficiency Option (AVEO), AB-637 and LRB-4560/1, that would reduce costs for supplies, postage, and personnel; allow electors to correct their ballots should a voting error occur; prevent absentee ballots from being damaged and reducing the number having to be remade on Election Day; and allowing clerks to better manage activities, respond to problems and issues, and improve timeliness of releasing voting results on Election Day.

THEREFORE, the Brown County Board of Supervisors are requesting legislators and the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) to adopt optional alternative absentee voting legislation prior to the November 6, 2018, election that will address election inefficiencies, reduce costs, and improve ballot management, processes and procedures and create early voting options to better serve large population governments and its electors.

## BROWN COUNTY WI - ABSENTEE BALLOTS CAST IN FALL GENERAL ELECTIONS

	Cast	% of Voters	
2002	4,442	0.06	<b>Governor</b>
2004	14,354	0.12	<b>Presidential</b>
2006	11,262	0.12	<b>Governor</b>
2008	33,395	0.27	<b>Presidential</b>
2010	11,892	0.13	<b>Governor</b>
2012	39,195	0.30	<b>Presidential</b>
2014	19,386	0.19	<b>Governor</b>
2016	43,033	0.33	<b>Presidential</b>





## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

201 DELAFIELD STREET  
WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN 53188-3633  
TELEPHONE 262/524-3701 FAX 262/524-3899

Shawn N. Reilly  
sreilly@ci.waukesha.wi.us

**To:** Committee on Campaigns and Elections  
**From:** Mayor Shawn Reilly  
**Copy:** Waukesha Common Council  
Representative Scot Allen  
Representative Adam Neylon  
Senator Chris Kapenga

**Date:** November 28, 2017

**RE: Support of AB 637**

Thank You Chairwoman Bernier and members of the Committee on Campaigns and Elections for the opportunity to provide my support of Assembly Bill 637.

I support AB 637 due to the tremendous increase in the number of people casting absentee ballots. I do not think it is a problem that more people are voting in person using absentee ballots. I do have an issue though on how our present system is set up to handle the large increase in the use of the absentee ballots. AB 637 is a well thought out option for municipal clerks to use to address the issues associated with the large numbers of people now using absentee ballots.

Absentee voting use to be the exception. It is not an exception anymore. In the City of Waukesha, 31% of total voting at the last Presidential election was cast by Absentee Ballot. Over 11,000 Waukesha voters used absentee voting to cast their votes. 75% of those (8,466) voted In-Person in the Clerk's office. They filled out their ballots and then inserted their ballot into an envelope as if they were mailing it back to the city.

Citizens demand, rightfully so, quick election night results and confidence in the voting system. The huge number of absentee ballots however slows down the process of determining final results. I personally will not use absentee balloting because I want to be certain that my ballot is accepted by the voting machine. In addition, the present method of absentee voting requires an inordinate amount of municipal staff time and unnecessarily uses financial resources to make the process run smoothly.

The City of Waukesha hired and trained a total of 30 poll workers and used three rooms just to count absentee ballots on Election Day in Nov. 2016. Those same workers also worked the weekend before the election to prepare the ballots for processing on Election Day. The total cost to Waukesha for election workers, staff overtime, and salaries and supplies associated with absentee ballots totaled a third of the total election cost, or approximately \$30,000.00. Additionally, both the Clerk and Deputy



Clerk were largely tied to managing the absentee vote count on Election Day and therefore had less availability to administer and assist at our 15 poll locations.

The proposed changes in AB 637 provide an option to Clerks that want or need to use it.

AB 637 offers:

- 1) cost savings to Waukesha of up to \$30,000 for Governor and Presidential elections.
- 2) Even greater ballot security
- 3) Increased voter confidence for in-person absentee voters that their vote will count
- 4) An opportunity for the voters in-office to be alerted of a balloting error and the ability to correct it instead of poll workers "remaking" voted ballots
- 5) Real-time system notification on voters that voted Absentee to discourage double voting
- 6) Less ballot envelope handling by staff

This legislation had the input of experienced Municipal Clerks and is a viable, optional process that offers increased voter confidence and cost savings to municipalities.

Thank you all for your time and interest in this issue. Please support AB 637. It will make my Clerk very happy.

Respectfully

Shawn Reilly, Mayor, City of Waukesha

### Comparison of Absentee Voting Procedures

The following is **only meant** to inform the discussion. For in-depth process details, readers should refer to individual state statutes.

Minnesota references:

2017 Minnesota Election Laws: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/2304/minnesota-election-laws-statutes-and-rules.pdf>

2016 Absentee Administration Guide: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/2092/absentee-voting-administration-guide.pdf>

Iowa reference: <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorguides.html>

Attributes	Wisconsin	LRB-1890/1 (AVEO)	Response from Waukesah Muni. Clerks	Minnesota	Iowa
<b>In-Person Absentee Voting</b>	Occurs as soon as ballots are available and is noticed by municipal clerk. Day/hours vary by municipality.	Municipalities choose to use AVEO. It is unclear if the in-person absentee voting procedure would concurrently continue(?).	See page 4 lines 15-16. Traditional Absentee voting may be used concurrently when the Clerk determines its use is necessary. We envisioned its use for challenged ballots, when AVEO was not available for some reason such as programming or testing issues, or if a voter wished to cast a ballot using an envelope instead. Any situation that may arise in which the Clerk determines it is necessary.	Begins 46 days before each state/federal election.	In-Person absentee voting begins no earlier than 40 days before an elections (for all elections)
<b>Early Voting</b>	N/A. No early voting.	3rd Monday preceding the election through Friday preceding the election.	There is nothing in the legislation that would prevent traditional absentee voting by envelope from being utilized prior to AVEO direct balloting as well.	"Direct Balloting" maybe begin the 7th Day prior to Election Day	N/A . No early voting.
<b>In-Person and Early Voting Implemented at the same time</b>	N/A	Unclear if in-person absentee voting may be used in tandem with AVEO(?).	Yes, see above	Yes - voters have a choice.	
<b>Governmental Level</b>	All Absentee Balloting Occurs at the Municipal Level	All Absentee Balloting Occurs at the Municipal Level		Absentee Balloting Occurs at the County Level <u>OR</u> the Municipal Level, if established.	Absentee Voting occurs at the County Level
<b>Absentee Review Board</b>	N/A	N/A	We anticipate using the Municipal or Local Board of Canvass to reconcile results. We don't believe creating another board is necessary.	Yes. Counties <u>OR</u> Municipalities with responsibility to accept and reject absentee ballots must establish an Absentee Review Board. Up until two weeks before Election Day, the Board must meet every 5 days to review received absentee envelopes, then within the two weeks leading up to Election Day, meet every 3 days.	Yes. Absentee and Special Voters Precinct (ASVP)

The following is **only meant** to inform the discussion. For in-depth process details, readers should refer to individual state statutes.

**Comparison of Absentee Voting Procedures**

Attributes	Wisconsin	LRB-1890/1 (AVEO)	Response from Waukesha Muni. Clerks	Minnesota	Iowa
<b>Spoil and Request a New Ballot</b> Yes, voters may currently do so prior to Election Day.	Yes, voters are not able to do so. AVEO voters are not able to do so. Mailed and In-Person absentee voters may do so.	Yes, required for all voters. In-Person absentee voters fill out the certificate envelope (as the application)	After the close of business on the seventh day before the election, a voter whose record indicates that an absentee ballot has been accepted (by the Absentee Review Board) <i>must not</i> be permitted to cast another ballot at that election.	Yes, required for all voters, including in-person voting and for those direct balloting. Direct balloting voters complete an absentee application and sign a voter's certificate.	Yes, required for all absentee voters.
<b>Absentee Application</b>	All absentee envelopes reviewed by municipal clerks upon receipt by the voter. Formal review, acceptance, rejection occurs at the polls by election inspectors.	All absentee ballots sealed in envelopes are reviewed by municipal clerks and formally by election inspectors.	All absentee ballots returned to the county or municipal clerk prior to the 7th Day prior to the election are reviewed by the Absentee Review Board.	Direct ballot voters submit an application and sign a voter's certificate. The county or municipal clerk interacts with the voter.	County auditor may direct the ASVP Board to review affidavit envelopes and open envelopes down to ASVP Board can begin counting absentee ballots the day before the election.
<b>Review of Absentee Certificate Envelopes</b>	All absentee envelopes reviewed by municipal clerks upon receipt by the voter. Formal review, acceptance, rejection occurs at the polls by election inspectors. No pre-processing occurs.	Absentee ballots do not submit an application. Interaction occurs with municipal clerk or deputy, voter signature is required.	Direct ballot voters submit an application and sign a voter's certificate. The county or municipal clerk interacts with the voter.	Challengers have a right to challenge <i>accepted</i> absentee ballots at the meeting of the absentee ballot board. In order to act as a challenger, an individual must provide a written letter from a political party or nonpartisan candidate. [There is another challenge process to challenge the eligibility or residence of a voter.]	Challengers are also permitted to challenge absentee ballots at the meeting of the week of direct balloting (?).
<b>Challenges to Absentee Voters</b>	§6.93 Challenging the absent elector. The vote of any absent elector may be challenged for cause and the inspectors of election shall have all the power and authority given them to hear and determine the legality of the ballot the same as if the ballot had been voted in person	§6.93 Challenging the absent elector. The vote of any absent elector may be challenged for cause and the inspectors of election shall have all the power and authority given them to hear and determine the legality of the ballot the same as if the ballot had been voted in person	Challengers are also permitted to challenge absentee ballots at the meeting of the week of direct balloting (?).	Challengers are also permitted to challenge absentee ballots at the meeting of the week of direct balloting (?).	Challengers are also permitted to challenge absentee ballots at the meeting of the week of direct balloting (?).

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Iowa reference: <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorguides.html>

Attributes	Wisconsin	LRB-1890/1 (AVEO)	Response from Waukesah Muni. Clerks	Minnesota	Iowa
Absentee Ballots Fed into Tabulators Prior to Election Day	N/A	Only in-person absentee ballots and only by voters (not by election inspectors).		<p>Voters have option to deposit in-person absentee ballots into the tabulators the week prior to Election Day.</p> <p>Absentee Review Board opens all "Accepted" absentee ballots (mailed and voted in-person) beginning the close of business 7th day prior to Election Day. Once the roster is marked, two board members initial the ballot and it is deposited in the tabulator.</p>	Yes, by the ASVP Board - Only the day before the election, and only for General Elections.
Write-ins	Ballots reviewed at the end of Election Night, voters for certain write-in candidates (e.g. registered write-ins) are tallied	<p>Part of legislation includes provision for a certified write-in report that can be printed by tabulator. Unclear when this would be certified(?).</p> <p><del>Otherwise, unclear when ballots will be reviewed, since they are sealed and stored at the municipal clerk's office(?).</del></p> <p>See municipal clerks' response. Ballots transported to central count or polls so that election inspectors can review ballots for write-ins. --&gt;</p>	If the snippet report fails to obtain certification by the Wisconsin Elections Commission, alternative procedures already in place such as sorting and tally of AVEO ballot write ins by Election Inspectors on Election Day during Central Count or at polling locations would have to be used. Since this is a procedural issue rather than authorizing legislation it is not included in the language of the bill. Similar to the Central Count process, the bill authorized its use and municipalities submitted their plan to WEC for authorization. We envision this legislation to work similarly.	<p>Minnesota law provides: For each day that absentee ballots are processed, the ballot board must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- remove the ballots from the ballot box</li> <li>- ensure that the total number of ballots processed matches the total number accepted</li> <li>- seal and secure all ballots</li> <li>- <i>keep write-ins separate by precinct for later tallying (general election only). Write-ins cannot be counted until after polls close on election day.</i></li> </ul>	



## Zuleger, Chad

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**From:** Tim Gramling <Tim@gramlinginc.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2017 10:28 AM  
**To:** Rep.Bernier  
**Cc:** Rep.Sanfelippo; Rep.Snyder; Rep.Horlacher; Rep.Schraa; Rep.Murphy; Rep.Kessler;  
Rep.Zamarripa; Rep.Taylor  
**Subject:** AB 637  
**Categories:** Chad

Dear Committee Members

I have been a poll worker for 10 years for the City of Brookfield and would like to comment on the upcoming hearing on AB 637 for allowing a voting machine to be used during the in-person absentee voting process.

I have noticed an increase of absentee/early voting in the last 8 years and allowing the vote to be entered when the ballot is submitted will stream line the voting process on election day, resulting in increased efficiencies and less possible errors in poll books.

Please consider voting for the passage of this bill.

Regards  
Tim Gramling  
Resident of the City of Brookfield

P 414-778-0610

C 414-807-0610

[WWW.GramlingInc.com](http://WWW.GramlingInc.com)

## Zuleger, Chad

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**From:** Warren Davidson <wdavidson3@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2017 8:43 AM  
**To:** Rep. Bernier  
**Subject:** SUBJECT: ABSENTEE BALLOTS

**Categories:** Chad

As a poll worker in the City of Brookfield, I have often wondered how many hands touch my absentee ballot after the envelope has been opened and dishonestly see that the ballot is never fed into the machine. Why can't I personally do it my self just as I would do it in person on election day?

## Zuleger, Chad

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**From:** Shana Ledvina <sledvina@mail.de-pere.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2017 1:27 PM  
**To:** Sen.LeMahieu; Rep.Bernier; Sen.Cowles; Rep.Steffen; Sen.Hansen; Rep.Macco; Sen.Lasee; Rep.Jacque  
**Cc:** juno\_sl@co.brown.wi.us; schmit\_jw@co.brown.wi.us; Haltom, Christopher - MUN; Clerk - Bonnie (Suamico) (bonnie@suamico.org); debbie@villageofallouez.com; Messerschmidt, Jennifer - MUN; Simons, Karen - MUN; kriste@greenbaywi.gov; Smith, Mary - MUN; Melissa Hongisto (MelissaH@Suamico.org); 'pmoynihan@ashwaubenon.com' (pmoynihan@ashwaubenon.com); Ledgeview  
**Subject:** 2017 ASSEMBLY BILL 637  
**Categories:** Chad

Greetings:

I am contacting you today regarding the Absentee Voting Efficiency Option (AVEO); it has come to my attention that you are meeting on this tomorrow. As the Clerk-Treasurer of the City of De Pere, I support this bill as a cost saving and voter efficiency measure. I would like to specifically share that the City of De Pere would benefit greatly from the proposed changes and that this would be a game-changer for us in the way that we run elections in the City of De Pere. For larger elections, our staff and poll workers spend hours upon hours before the election alphabetizing and numbering absentee ballots. Election Day is no different. For the November 2016 Election, we had 16 poll workers work a 14 hour day processing the nearly 5,545 absentee ballots that we received. The proposed legislation presents a process that I have hoped for since becoming a municipal clerk 5 years ago, when I was able to experience firsthand how cumbersome the processing of absentee ballots was. With the absentee option becoming more and more popular among voters, this is an excellent tool for municipalities to use to help in handling the large amounts of absentee ballots we receive.

### ABSENTEE VOTING EFFICIENCY OPTION (AVEO)

1. Cost savings to local governments - Reduces personnel and supply costs
2. Increases accuracy on ballot - Voter is notified if they made a mistake when marking their ballot and gives them a chance to correct
3. Reduces the number of ballots being remade by poll workers - Voter can correct their ballot
4. Instills voter confidence that their ballot was counted - voter will feed the ballot directly into the voting equipment
5. Voters will be marked as voted in statewide system instantly.

Your consideration is greatly appreciated and I can be contacted at any time to discuss the benefits of the AVEO option for the City of De Pere. My direct line is 920-339-4072 ext. 1355.

Thank you, Representative Steffen, for adding your name as a co-sponsor to this bill!

Sincerely,

**Shana Ledvina**  
City of De Pere Clerk-Treasurer  
335 S. Broadway Street  
De Pere WI 54115  
920.339.4050

As the Clerk-Treasurer of the Village of Allouez, I also support the bill regarding the Absentee Voting Efficiency Option (AVEO) as a cost saving and voter efficiency measure. With the absentee option becoming more and more popular among voters, this is an excellent tool for municipalities to use to help in handling the large amounts of absentee ballots we receive.

ABSENTEE VOTING EFFICIENCY OPTION (AVEO)

1. Cost savings to local governments - Reduces personnel and supply costs
2. Increases accuracy on ballot - Voter is notified if they made a mistake when marking their ballot and gives them a chance to correct
3. Reduces the number of ballots being remade by poll workers - Voter can correct their ballot
4. Instills voter confidence that their ballot was counted - voter will feed the ballot directly into the voting equipment
5. Voters will be marked as voted in statewide system instantly.

Your consideration is greatly appreciated,

*Debbie Baenen, Clerk-Treasurer*



*.....where everyday we walk from a historic past into a bright and exciting future.  
We invite you to join a community that has always been "historically progressive."*

1900 Libal Street  
Green Bay, WI 54301  
(920)448-2800 ext. 111  
[www.villageofallouez.com](http://www.villageofallouez.com)

*MISSION: We are to be a responsive municipal government which provides efficient and cost effective services to a proud residential and business community.*



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