



GAE MAGNAFICI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 28th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Representative Krug, honorable members of the Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections,

I'm here before you today to shed light on a pivotal issue concerning the integrity and transparency of our electoral process. Our great state of Wisconsin thrives on the principles of democracy and the trust vested in elected officials by the people. However, this trust has been shaken by recent events.

Our Secretary of State, after being duly elected, chose to vacate the position shortly after election. This departure left a significant void, which was filled by an appointment from the Governor, bringing an unelected bureaucrat into a critical position within our executive branch. This action not only bypasses the electoral process but undermines the democratic ideals that form the bedrock of our governance structure.

Assembly Bill 476 represents a stride toward rekindling the trust of the Wisconsin electorate in our democratic framework. This legislation seeks to refine the vacancy filling process by incorporating the legislative branch, specifically through seeking the advice and consent of the Senate. This enhanced procedure aims to ensure that the filling of vacancies in elective state offices within the executive branch is conducted in a manner that resonates with the democratic principles held dear by our citizenry.

The need for such a legislation is clear and pressing. The scenario where an elected office becomes a game of musical chairs, with unelected bureaucrats taking positions of authority without the direct consent of the governed, is a stark deviation from the principles that underpin our democracy.

I urge this esteemed committee to consider the long-term implications of such precedents and the message it sends to the electorate. Assembly Bill 476 seeks to restore a measure of accountability, transparency, and trust in the process by which vacancies in elective state offices are filled.

I kindly implore the members of this committee to support Assembly Bill 476, ensuring that the voices of the Wisconsin electorate are heard and respected in the filling of vacancies within our executive branch.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



CORY TOMCZYK

STATE SENATOR • 29TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony – AB 476

Assembly Committee on Campaigns & Elections
Tuesday, October 31, 2023

In the November, 2022 election, Wisconsin voters went to the polls to elect their representatives. At the time, voters were under the impression that the candidates they chose would go on to fulfill the office they were elected to for their entire term. Unfortunately, Wisconsin's Secretary of State chose to resign just 76 DAYS into his four-year term after serving for 42 years. At that point, the Governor was able to appoint his replacement, undercutting the ability of the electorate to choose the Secretary of State for the remainder of the term – over three and a half years. The Governor simply was able to hand-pick a replacement of his choosing without any say from the voters.

Under AB 476, if an executive branch vacancy occurs on or after January 1st of a year in which there is a regularly scheduled election for said office, the vacancy would be filled by a nomination of the Governor and then to the State Senate for a confirmation vote.

If the vacancy were to occur prior to January 1st of the year of the regularly scheduled election for said office, the Governor must call a special election to fill the remainder of the term.

AB 476 is about good government. The residents of Wisconsin choose who represents them in the executive branch by going to the polls, NOT by the Governor picking one of his friends.