

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

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TO: Legislative Council's Election Law Review Committee
FROM: Beverly J. Speer, Advocacy Director - speer@wisdc.org
RE: Concerns relating to suggestions for modification to law regarding statewide voter registration list

I have attended the last two Election Law Review Committee meetings. I am pleased by the level of public member participation in the discussions. I was particularly pleased to see the City of Milwaukee represented in the last meeting. I look forward to the next meeting when the committee continues discussion on the suggestions for modification to the law as relates in particular to the new statewide voter registration list. With this in mind, below I list a number of questions and areas of concern that I would like to have the committee address and discuss at the next meeting on this matter:

- 1) I am deeply disturbed by the thought of **requiring the public to pay \$1000 per copy of the voter list**. I understand there is a lot of information on a statewide voter list, but this is prohibitive for most public members, likely limiting access only to those political professionals who can afford it. This further demonstrates the role and influence of money in politics and an unhealthy democratic process. I was under the impression that by law charges to the public for open records requests were limited to the actual cost of duplicating the information. Would this data not be provided in electronic format which would be much cheaper than a paper hard copy? I am unclear whether that public records request fee would include maintenance of the voter list which would involve a lot of costs given the amount of money the state would be paying to outsource such work.
- 2) On that matter, concerns centered around **outsourcing the voter list** generally and the Accenture contract specifically are not mentioned anywhere as items for discussion.
- 3) One media source suggested that **ALL current voters in the state will be required to re-register** in 2006 for the new voter list? Is this true? I am aware that under HAVA, unlike the current Wisconsin system, municipalities under 5000 in population will be required to register voters by the 2006 elections. Could this concern please be addressed (and I hope, laid to rest) at the next meeting? There are obviously major implications with this if it is true--primarily huge lines and delays on Election Day and meeting same-day registration requirements if not aware they will need to register.
- 4) Regarding the **out-of-state student drivers' licenses number submission** suggestion...isn't this unequal application of the law if not all out-of-state students have an out-of-state driver's license?

I look forward to hearing committee members' thoughts on these concerns and the Legislative Council's plans for further review.