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# TYLER VORPAGEL

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 27<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Assembly Bill 532: relating to training period for election officials and terms for members of a board of canvassers**

**Testimony of State Representative Tyler Vorpapel  
Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections  
January 13, 2016**

Thank you Chairperson Bernier and committee members on Campaigns and Elections for hearing Assembly Bill 532 (AB 532). Current law requires that election officials attend at least one training event every two years. However, state statute doesn't explain the beginning or end of this 2 year period, creating a system that provides for unnecessary administrative work to make sure election officials have attended training within the last two years. This bill would create a system that requires this two year cycle begins January 1 of an even-numbered year and continues through December 31 of the following odd-numbered year. This bill also synchronizes the two-year term for members of a board of canvassers with the two year training for election officials.

This bill will help municipal clerks, special registration deputies, and election inspectors by giving them a beginning and end period for which they need to have attended a training session. This will eliminate administrative difficulties for local election officials, and align the period with the board of canvassers so there is only one set of dates for which election officials have to look between.

I appreciate the committee taking the time to discuss AB 532, and am open for any questions if you should have them. Thank you for your consideration.



# Mary Lazich

President  
Wisconsin State Senate

**Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections  
Assembly Bill 532  
January 13, 2016**

Thank you Chair Bernier for scheduling Assembly Bill 532 (AB 532) a public hearing, and thank you committee members for attention to AB 532. AB 532 synchronizes the training period for election officials and the term for members of a board of canvassers.

Currently law requires election officials to attend at least one training every two years. Yet, state statute does not indicate the beginning or the end of the period, creating a system of disarray and unnecessary administrative work.

The Government Accountability Board submitted a scope statement to Governor Walker requesting this change. However, this technical fix should be a statute rather than administrative rule.

AB 532 requires that cycles for election officials training begins January 1 of an even-numbered year and continues through December 31 of the following odd-numbered year. Additionally, the bill aligns the two-year term for members of a board of canvassers with the two-year training cycle for election officials.

The date change synchronizes the certification terms for municipal clerks, special registration deputies, election inspectors, and the term for members of a board of canvassers. This will eliminate significant confusion and administrative difficulties for local election officials.

I ask the committee approve AB 532. Thank you for your attention.

**Testimony of Michael Haas  
Elections Division Administrator  
Wisconsin Government Accountability Board**

**Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections**

**January 13, 2016**

**Room 400 Northeast, State Capitol  
Public Hearing**

**Assembly Bill 532**

Chairperson Bernier and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Assembly Bill 532. This bill would synchronize the training and certification terms of all election officials to run from January 1<sup>st</sup> of each even-numbered year to December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year, and would establish those terms in the Statutes. The bill is consistent with efforts of the Government Accountability Board to amend its administrative rules in order to achieve the same result.

There are seven categories of election officials who are appointed and certified to serve at elections during two-year terms, including municipal clerks, chief election inspectors, regular election inspectors, special registration deputies, special voting deputies, election greeters, and board of canvassers members. The current statutes specify that the two-year training and certification terms of four of these categories of election officials commence in even-numbered years and end in odd-numbered years. This bill would mirror those terms and training cycles for the remaining three categories of election officials – municipal clerks, special registration deputies, and members of municipal and county boards of canvassers.

The terms of canvass board members are currently set in the statutes which would be amended by this bill. The training and certification terms for municipal clerks and special registration deputies are currently established in the administrative rules, and those rules would be superseded by this bill. The current statutes and administrative rules establish terms for these three categories of election officials as starting on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each odd-numbered year and ending on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

The Government Accountability Board adopted a staff recommendation to promulgate revisions to its administrative rules to change the training and certification terms of municipal clerks and special registration deputies to make them consistent with the terms

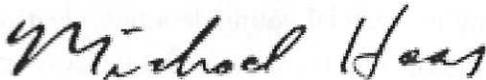
of other election officials. The Board recognized that synchronizing the terms of all election officials would reduce confusion and improve the consistency and efficiency of training requirements. Initiating the Board's rulemaking process led to discussions with the bill's author regarding establishing consistent terms in the statutes. While the Board has not weighed in on this particular bill, it accomplishes what the Board set out to do by revising its administrative rules.

Apart from consistency, one reason to commence certification terms in even-numbered years is that it allows those officials more opportunities to apply newly-learned skills in a calendar year with four regular elections rather than two. The political parties have also stated that the higher-profile elections in even-numbered years generate more interest in serving as election officials and encourage more individuals to apply for those positions.

The legislation addresses the terms of current officials in the three affected categories – municipal clerks, special registration deputies, and canvass board members, whose terms would expire at the end of 2016 under current law. Section 8 of the bill clarifies that those terms will be extended for one year in order to transition them to the same cycle as other election officials.

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 are available to answer questions and work with you in developing proposed legislation.

Respectfully submitted,



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Elections Division Administrator  
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