

WISCONSIN STATE
LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

1999-00

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on
Campaigns &
Elections
(AC-CE)

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- > 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01a
- > 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01b
- > 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt02

Published Documents

> Committee Hearings ... CH (Public Hearing Announcements)

> **

> Committee Reports ... CR

> **

> Executive Sessions ... ES

> **

> Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

> **

*Information Collected For Or
Against Proposal*

> Appointments ... Appt

> **

> Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

**

> Hearing Records ... HR (bills and resolutions)

> **99hr_ajr0033_AC-CE_pt01**

> Miscellaneous ... Misc

> **

Vote Record

Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections

AJR 33

Date: 5/11/99 Moved by: Ladwig Seconded by: Mont
 AB: _____ Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 AB: _____ SB: _____ Appointment: _____
 AJR: 33 SJR: _____ Other: _____
 A: _____ SR: _____

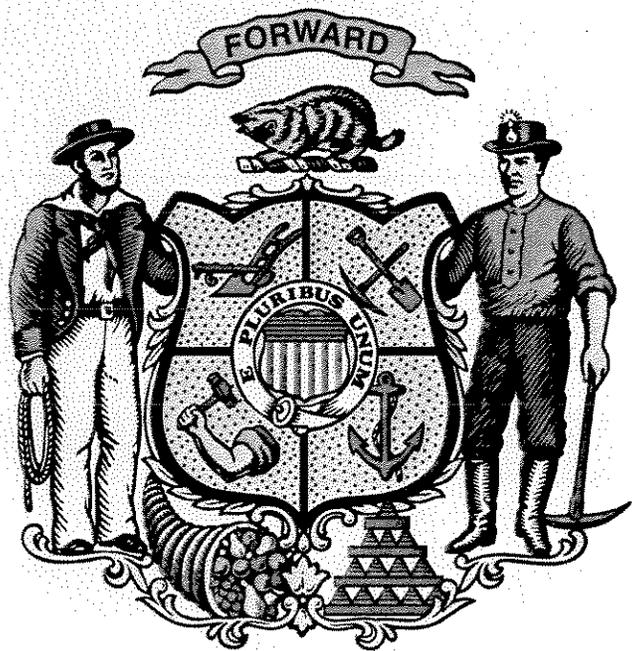
A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Sub Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Sub Amdt: _____

- Be recommended for:
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passage | <input type="checkbox"/> Indefinite Postponement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Tabling |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adoption | <input type="checkbox"/> Concurrence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonconcurrence |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation |

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Rep. Stephen Freese, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Scott Suder	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Scott Walker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Phil Montgomery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Bonnie Ladwig	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. David Travis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. David Cullen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Mark Miller	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rep. Gary Sherman	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Totals: 5 3 1 _____

Motion Carried Motion Failed



APR 33

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION COUNCIL OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

c/o City of Greenfield, 7325 West Forest Home Avenue, Greenfield, Wisconsin 53220

Resolution by the Intergovernmental Cooperation Council of
Milwaukee County Regarding Special Elections

WHEREAS, Current State Statutes require municipalities to hold special elections without regard to the timing of regularly scheduled elections; and

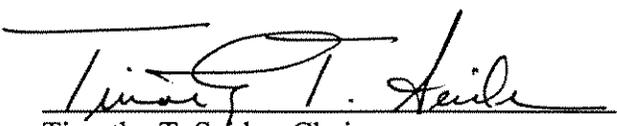
WHEREAS, Scheduling special elections without regard to other regularly scheduled elections is confusing to voters and requires wasteful expenditures by municipalities; and

WHEREAS, Municipalities do not always have voting machines available for special elections held without regard to scheduled elections; now, therefore, be it

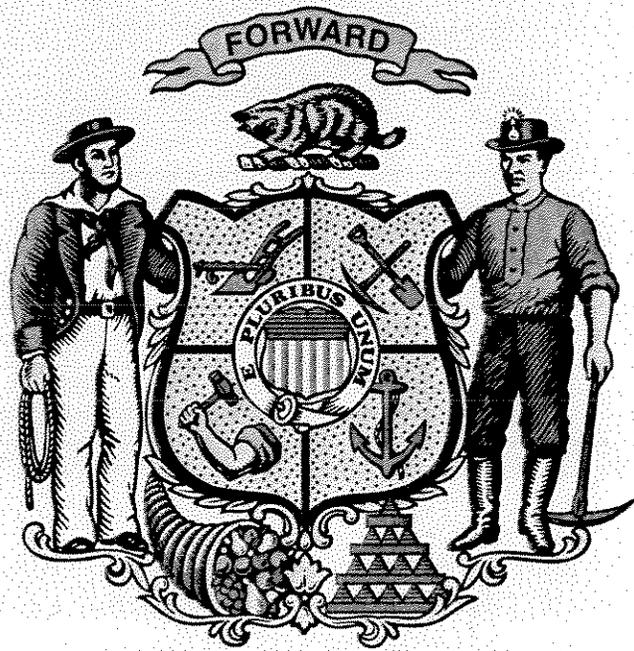
RESOLVED, That the Intergovernmental Cooperation Council of Milwaukee County goes on record in support of amending the state statutes to prohibit any special elections from being held within ninety days of regularly scheduled elections and requires them to be held concurrent with the regularly scheduled primary and general elections; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to all of the state elected officials representing Milwaukee County, the League of Municipalities, and the Wisconsin Alliance of Cities.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 28th day of December, 1998.


Timothy T. Seider, Chairman
Intergovernmental Cooperation Council
of Milwaukee County

Bayside-Brown Deer-County of Milwaukee-Cudahy-Fox Point-Franklin-Glendale-Greendale
Greenfield-Hales Corners-Milwaukee-Oak Creek-River Hills-St. Francis-Shorewood
South Milwaukee-Wauwatosa-West Allis-West Milwaukee-Whitefish Bay





Representative Mark D. Gundrum
State Capitol, P.O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 267-5158 ✉ (414) 425-2596

TO: All Legislators
FROM: State Representative Mark D. Gundrum
DATE: February 8, 1999
RE: Co-Sponsorship of LRB-1026 requiring *referendums* to be voted on during spring and fall general elections. (*The Referendum Bill*)

Last session there was an effort in the Senate to place the referendum on the issue of creating a state constitutional amendment protecting the right to keep and bear arms on the September primary ballot rather than the November general election ballot. Had this effort succeeded, we would have faced a situation where our State Constitution would have been amended by just a fraction of the voting age population in Wisconsin, rather than by the November popular vote which more accurately gauges the will of the public.

As we all know, there are also local referendums which are held at odd times of the year, often specifically scheduled so as to produce a very limited voter turnout. In such situations, it is a farce to refer to these votes as "*referendums*" in that referendums are supposed to provide a snapshot of the public opinion with regard to a particular issue or measure.

This bill is designed to constitutionalize the principle that referendums ought to accomplish the purpose for which they are purported to exist, i.e. gauging the will of the public. The constitutional provision itself is completely neutral as to which issues should or should not require a referendum, but rather establishes a constitutional principle with regard to referendums. An additional side benefit of this constitutional provision is that it would save taxpayers thousands, if not millions, of dollars in local property taxes when the cost to municipalities of holding special elections for just a single issue or measure is taken into account.

If you would like to co-sponsor **LRB 1026**, please contact my office at 267-5158 by **February 26, 1999**. The LRB Analysis is printed below.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This proposed constitutional amendment, proposed to the 1999 legislature on first consideration, requires that a state or local referendum, whether proposing an amendment to this constitution or otherwise, be held only at an election, other than a primary election, at which either members of the legislature or members of the judiciary are regularly elected.

A proposed constitutional amendment requires adoption by 2 successive legislatures, and ratification by the people, before it can become effective.

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That:

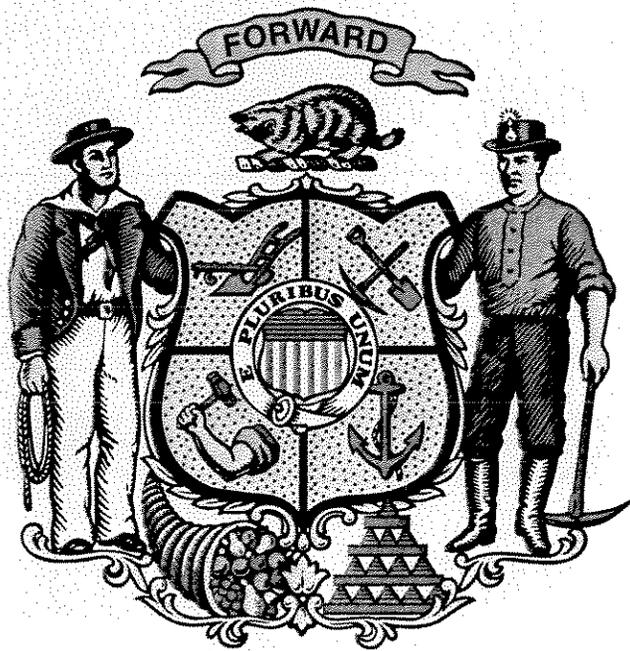
Section 1. Section 13 of article XIII of the constitution is created to read:

[Article XIII] Section 13. A state or local referendum, whether proposing an amendment to this constitution or otherwise, may be held only at an election, other than a primary election, at which either members of the legislature or members of the judiciary are regularly elected.

Section 2. NUMBERING OF NEW PROVISION. The new section 13 of article XIII of the constitution created in this joint resolution shall be designated by the next higher open whole section number in that article if, before the ratification by the people of the amendment proposed in this joint resolution, any other ratified amendment has created a section 13 of article XIII of the constitution of this state. If one or more joint resolutions create a section 13 of article XIII simultaneously with the ratification by the people of the amendment proposed in this joint resolution, the sections created shall be numbered and placed in a sequence so that the sections created by the joint resolution having the lowest enrolled joint resolution number have the numbers designated in that joint resolution and the sections created by the other joint resolutions have numbers that are in the same ascending order as are the numbers of the enrolled joint resolutions creating the sections.

Be it further resolved, That this proposed amendment be referred to the legislature to be chosen at the next general election and that it be published for 3 months previous to the time of holding such election.

(END)





CITY
OF
WAUKESHA

CAROL J. LOMBARDI
MAYOR

This distribution has been
authorized by

Scott [Signature]
Signature

City of Waukesha Common Council Resolution

Whereas, taxpayers in the State of Wisconsin are funding public schools at a 66-2/3% commitment, and,

Whereas, school districts in the State of Wisconsin have the authority to hold referendum votes asking for building construction and renovations of school structure costs which are currently reimbursable by the 66-2/3 formula, and

Whereas, local taxpayers should bear costs of local construction through local levy and not through the local school aid formula.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Common council of the City of Waukesha urge State of Wisconsin legislators to determine referendum elections by school districts be held the same dates as local elections and that all school constructions or renovation costs be charged to the school district's local budget and not derived from the state education 2/3 formula plan or any other state funding.

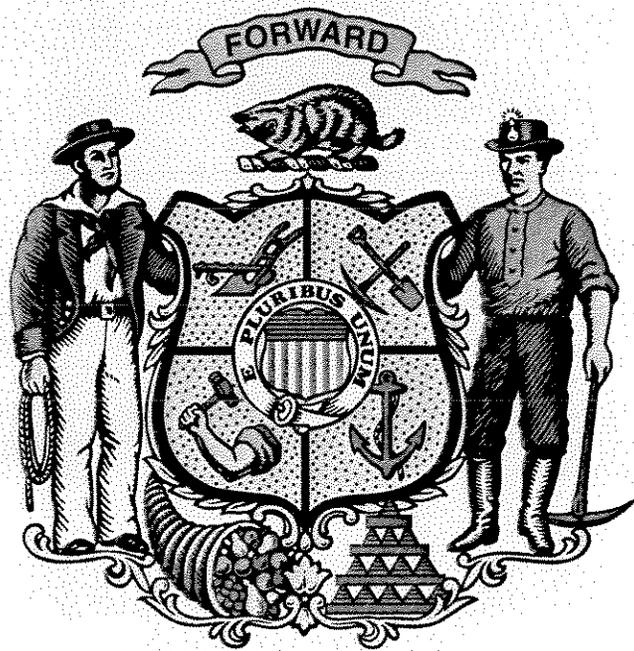
Adopted and approved by the Waukesha Common Council March 2, 1999.

Attest:

Thomas O'Neill

Clerk

Carol J. Lombardi
Mayor



AJR33

**TESTIMONY TO THE COMMITTEE ON CAMPAIGNS AND
ELECTIONS REGARDING ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 33
APRIL 28, 1999**

Honorable Chairman and members of the Committee on Campaigns and Elections, my name is Donald Kristopeit. I am President of the Federation of Wisconsin Taxpayer Organizations (FWTO). I am also a member of the Oak Creek Citizens Action (OCCA), the South Milwaukee Alliance for Responsible Taxation (SMART) and the Milwaukee Public Affairs Council (MPAC).

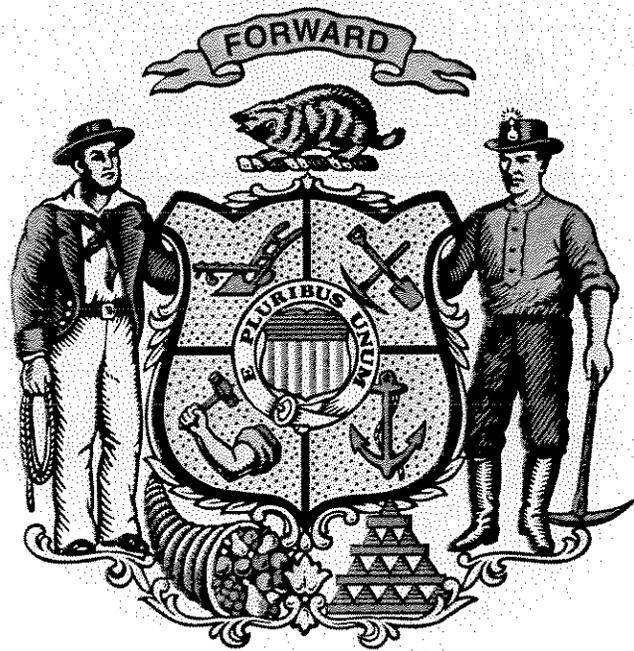
This proposed constitutional amendment, AJR33, requires that a state or local referendum, whether proposing an amendment to the constitution or otherwise, be held only at an election, other than a primary election, at which either members of the legislature or members of the judiciary are regularly elected.

Those of us who pay our taxes in Wisconsin are resolute in our support of AJR33.

Since the inauguration of the state 2/3 funding plan, taxpayers have been confronted with repetitive referenda requesting major outlays for new buildings and/or maintenance and remodeling of older buildings. To taxpayers it appears that the proponents have difficulty in understanding the two letter word "NO"!

Taxpayers are convinced that educational goals can be achieved when taxpayers are presented with realistic needs that meet sound educational and business principles. Taxpayers believe that the common sense approach offered by AJR33 will direct the attention of all citizens to the building of a strong consensus for educational responsibility.

I sincerely appreciate and thank you for allowing me to present the taxpayers' viewpoint on this proposal.



APR 30

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT TO LEGISLATORS APRIL 28, 1999

by
FRANK KIRSCHBRAUN

REQUEST THAT RESTRAINTS BE PUT UPON
FREQUENCY OF BALLOTING FOR
REFERENDUMS DEDICATED TO
PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING
FUNDING

Reasons for corrective legislation:

A) The public is subjected to unnecessary additional costs when referendums can take place at random almost any day of the year.

B) Avoidance of standard voting dates for primary and final elections are chosen to bring school building advocates an edge they would not otherwise have.

C) Votes can be repeated again and again until the resources of citizen opposition are exhausted.

A total of eight (8) referendums were voted down by the citizens of Antigo, WI

A total of five (5) votes were needed to overcome citizen opposition in West Allis, WI.

D) Consultants --at taxpayer expense -- are often hired to bring about success in referendums.

E) School construction advocates are likely to use deception in reaching their goal with an "end-justifies-the-means" activity.

We thank you for giving this presentation your review.

Sincerely,


Frank Kirschbraun

Enc. Journal Sentinel

9-16-96

Enc. State Atty.Gen.

4-21-99

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1996

School projects tax state

Referendums test funding controls

BY TOM HEINEN
of the Journal Sentinel staff

A surge in successful school building referendums has alarmed some state legislators and could spur new spending controls because it is increasing state government's financial burdens as Wisconsin begins shouldering two-thirds of the cost of public education.

The Legislature's Joint Finance Committee had to allocate an additional \$30 million in state aid for schools in 1996-'97 in large part because of an unexpected increase in voter-approved school referendums, state records show.

Since that action was taken in June, more school districts have passed or planned referendums and are taking advantage of school-aid laws that allow annual debt service payments for construction to



State Sen.
Michael Ellis:

"The State of
Wisconsin

cannot afford

a building binge year in
and year out in which
the state treasury has to
pay two-thirds."

be included in state aid calculations.

For voters in many school districts, the opportunity to approve building improvements and still see their tax rates drop has been attractive.

But the cumulative effect for the state treasury has been to expand school district spending at precisely the time the state has agreed to increase its share of local school costs.

The impact has some legislators worried.

Please see SCHOOLS page 7

Schools/Building projects test sta

From page 1

"This places the state treasury in serious jeopardy because it will exacerbate what two-thirds is," said Senate Minority Leader Michael Ellis (R-Neenah), author of the state's school revenue controls. "We're going to have to go back and rewrite the revenue controls."

"The State of Wisconsin cannot afford a building binge year in and year out in which the state treasury has to pay two-thirds."

Many educators, however, think that the state-aid formula and the ability to exceed revenue caps if voters approve construction referendums address critical needs.

"The Legislature and the governor are accomplishing what they set out to achieve, and that is property tax relief," said



Brancel

Miles Turner, executive director of the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators.

"It may have caught the state a little off guard that so many referendums would be passing, increasing the cost to the state. But to change the process will simply continue to extend the aging-school problems and maintenance-deferment problems that have plagued the state for years," Turner said.

Ellis agreed the problem of aging school buildings needed to be addressed, but in an orderly way with predictable costs and consciously selected priorities. He said a proposal dealing with building needs, referendums and revenue caps should be ready for discussion by legislators next spring.

Rep. Ben Brancel (R-Endeavor), co-chairman of the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee, was not as concerned as Ellis about the state's increased costs.

"I believe it will challenge legislators of the future," Brancel said. "In the short term, in the next two to four years, I believe that under our current economic conditions, under our

ability to restrain spending, we will continue to be able to meet those obligations."

\$30 Million More Needed

The Joint Finance Committee, which did not need approval from the Senate or House, dealt with the immediate referendum costs in June. With the state already committed to increasing school aids and school tax levy credits by more than \$970 million in 1996-'97, the committee had to add \$30 million to that total.

State funding of education has risen from around 40% to nearly 67% in recent years, with the biggest increase scheduled to be reflected on property tax bills this December.

However, that is a statewide average. Some property-rich school districts will get relatively little aid, while some poor districts will get much more than 67% of their expenses covered by the state.

Turner said the big influx of state aid this year has enabled many districts to pass referendums for badly needed construction, renovation, maintenance and technology projects.

The passage rate of school referendums has increased since school revenue controls went into effect in 1993-'94, according to preliminary results from a statewide survey conducted this summer by the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators and the Wisconsin Education Association Council, the state's largest teachers union.

About 70% of the state's 426 school superintendents responded to the survey. The 90 districts that held only one referendum in the past three fiscal years had an 80% passage rate. The 53 districts that tried two or more times to get a referendum approved were ultimately successful slightly less than 50% of the time.

"That's a significantly higher rate of passage than we've experienced in the past in the state of Wisconsin," Turner said. "It's very encouraging to school officials that the public is responding in a positive manner to the needs of children."

"I think there's a general

feeling in the public that school costs are under control and that referendum expenses will not be on top of significant increases in the budget for other expenditures."

Property Taxes Play a Role

The state-imposed revenue caps generally prevent school districts from spending tax-relief money for other purposes without a referendum. But many districts have passed referendums by showing residents that their taxes will still decrease or rise only slightly even if they approve the new spending, Turner said.

That was a major factor in the Muskego-Norway School District, local officials said. After three previous failed referendums, voters Tuesday overwhelmingly voted to spend up to \$12.7 million for a new middle school and to exceed the state revenue cap by \$750,000 to operate the building.

The new state aid this year has made Muskego-Norway nearly a 50% aid district. Without the construction, the school property tax rate would have dropped from \$16.77 to \$12.47 per \$1,000 of equalized value. Now, the rate is estimated to be about \$13.49 per \$1,000, if bonds can be issued in time this year.

But Charles Brenden, the district's business manager, cautioned that the state aid formula covers only the annual debt service on money borrowed for such projects. The percentage that the state ultimately pays will depend on whether the district's aid percentage, which is determined by a complex formula, remains high throughout the 20-year amortization period.

WATA

West Allis Taxpayers Association
6227 W. Greenfield Ave. • West Allis, WI 53214
RM. 212 (414) 774-3373

April 21, 1999

James E. Doyle- Attorney General
State of Wisconsin
Room 114 East
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Re: Referendum - 2-16-99

Dear Attorney General Doyle:

Enclosed are documents that clearly prove deception by the West Allis-West Milwaukee et al, School District leadership in order to make a facility rehabilitation project more appealing to the voter.

Whereas the five-school facility project is described on the ballot as costing \$3.5 million, the total cost for all five will actually be \$5 million!

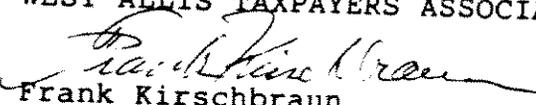
Omitted from the ballot is the fact that there will be an added \$1.5 million from reserves already on hand.

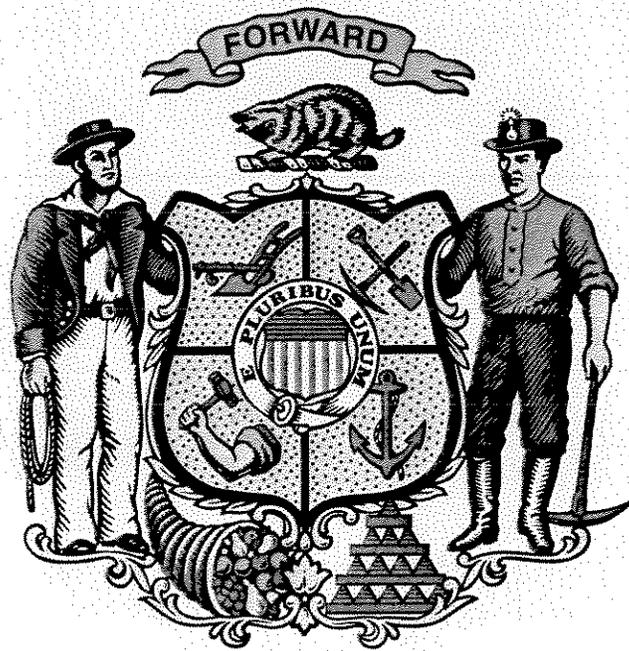
It appears to members of the WEST ALLIS TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION, that disingenuous wording of the February 16, 1999 ballot violates Wisconsin State Statutes: is it not true that a violation of the law and basic integrity as well, should be the subject of legal action?

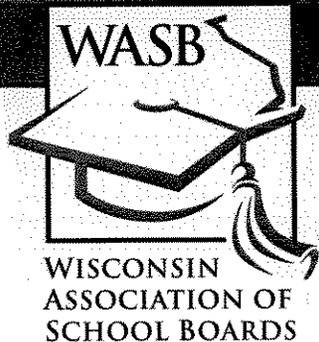
In line with paragraph three of the February 25, 1999 letter from the State of Wisconsin Elections Board, we are seeking your assistance at this time.

Thank you for giving this your attention.

WEST ALLIS TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION


Frank Kirschbraun
1st Vice President





122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703
PHONE: 608-257-2622 • FAX: 608-257-8386

KEN COLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 10, 1999

Rep. Steve Freese
Chairperson
Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

Re: AJR 33 – Referenda

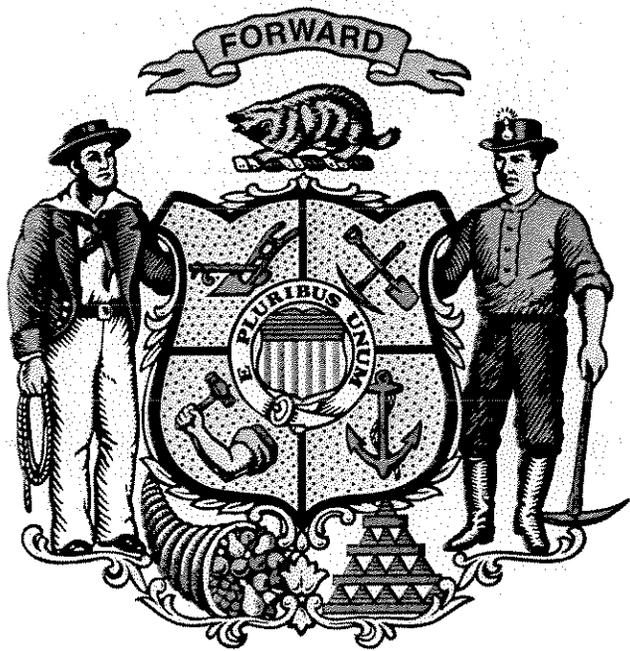
Dear Rep. Freese:

The WASB urges your committee to amend AJR 33 to exclude school district referenda from the requirements of the resolution. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Senn'.

Senn Brown
Director of Legislative Services



9805 W. Montana Ave.
West Allis, WI 53227-3327

May 12, 1999

Campaigns & Elections Committees
Wisconsin State Assembly
Madison, WI 53702

REC

MAY 13 1999

Assembly Speaker
pro Tempore

Dear Rep. Freese:

Might it be a valid plan to prefix Wisconsin ballots with the following disclaimer?

"Wisconsin ballots may vary from accuracy due to the fact that in many cases, the end justifies the means."

Please refer to the attached file relative the ballot of February 16, 1999 covering an issue of spending in the West Allis-West Milwaukee et al School District.

Sincerely,



Frank Kirschbraun



West Allis Taxpayers Association

6227 W. Greenfield Ave. • West Allis, WI 53214
RM. 212 (414) 774-3373

April 21, 1999

James E. Doyle- Attorney General
State of Wisconsin
Room 114 East
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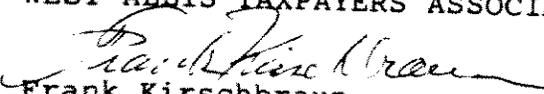
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Thank you for giving this your attention.

WEST ALLIS TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION


Frank Kirschbraun
1st Vice President

OFFICIAL PRIMARY BALLOT
FOR JUDICIAL OFFICE AND SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENDUM
FEBRUARY 16, 1999

NOTICE TO ELECTORS: THIS BALLOT MAY BE INVALID UNLESS INITIALED BY TWO (2) ELECTION INSPECTORS. IF CAST AS AN ABSENTEE BALLOT, THE BALLOT MUST BEAR THE INITIALS OF THE MUNICIPAL CLERK OR DEPUTY CLERK.

IMPORTANT: USE A #2 PENCIL OR THE MARKING PEN PROVIDED. DO NOT USE RED INK!
 To vote for the candidate of your choice, complete the arrow at the RIGHT of the candidate's name like this .
 To vote for a person whose name does not appear on the ballot, write the person's name on the line provided and complete the arrow at the RIGHT of the line like this .

JUDICIAL

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE
BRANCH 47
 (Vote for One)

JOHN SIEFERT 

DAVID A. FEISS 

ANN T. BOWE 

WRITE IN 

SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENDUM

To vote on the question, complete the arrow  to the RIGHT of "YES" if in favor of the question, or complete the arrow  to the RIGHT of "NO" if opposed to the question.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WEST ALLIS-WEST MILWAUKEE, ET. AL., MILWAUKEE AND WAUKESHA COUNTIES, WISCONSIN

Shall the following Initial Resolution be approved:

INITIAL RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING GENERAL OBLIGATION SCHOOL BUILDING BONDS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$3,500,000

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of the School District of West Allis-West Milwaukee, et al., Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, Wisconsin that there shall be issued pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation school building bonds in an amount not to exceed \$3,500,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of renovations and additions to Nathan Hale High School to provide additional classroom and library space, a cafeteria and an auxiliary gymnasium; renovations and additions to Longfellow Elementary School, Franklin Elementary School, and Jefferson Elementary School; and renovations to Pershing Elementary School."

YES _____

NO _____

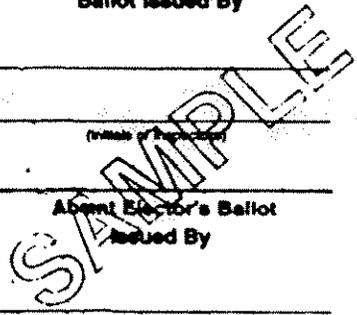
OFFICIAL PRIMARY BALLOT
 FOR
JUDICIAL OFFICE AND SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENDUM
 FEBRUARY 16, 1999
 FOR
CITY OF WEST ALLIS
A.D. 1-WARD 1

Ballot Issued By _____

(Initials of Inspector) _____

Absent Elector's Ballot Issued By _____

(Initials of Municipal or Deputy Clerk) _____



or Assistance

Ballot was marked
 is authorized
 assistance upon
 by the elector.

 (Initials)



Communicator

A bi-monthly publication to help inform employees of current school district news, events and issues.

Referendum set for Feb. 16, 1999



The Board of Education approved a \$3.5 million referendum to be held on Feb. 16, 1999 for additions and renovations to Hale and several elementary schools.

A cafeteria and auxiliary gym would be included in the Hale project and some existing space would be reconfigured to enlarge the library and provide five classrooms.

Franklin, Jefferson, and Longfellow would receive up-grades similar to those previously done at Mann. Mann renovations included some classroom reconfiguring and building security improvements, electrical and mechanical system upgrades, and where needed, new paint, ceilings and floors. Pershing would receive minor renovations to provide for full-day kindergarten.

According to Superintendent of Schools Harold Sloan, the primary purpose of the referendum is to increase the life-spans of the targeted elementary schools and to address Hale's long-time cafeteria, library, and classroom needs.

Total project cost is \$5 million, which includes \$1.5 million previously set aside from capital improvements, according to Director of Business Services David Branback. If approved, the referendum would increase taxes on a \$100,000 home by \$22 per year.

It won't be easy

Wisconsin's high school graduation exam will be so difficult that few students will pass it the first time, according to H. Gary Cook, director of the office of educational accountability for the Department of Public Instruction. His remarks were quoted in the Dec. 26 edition of the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*. This year's eighth graders will be the first to have to pass the exam if they are to receive a diploma. As the law is currently written, they will have five chances to pass the exam.

Cook said that the greatest difficulties would occur in cases where local curriculum does not align with the state exams.

No school board primary

There will not be a Board of Education primary election in February. At least seven candidates would have been necessary for a primary. As of January 5, six candidates had returned nomination forms. They are incumbents Carol Gamson, Edward Keever and Robert Kitchen, as well as Rita Kohis and Susan Sujecki, and former board member Mary Ryback.

Board members want to hear from you

Do you have a classroom project with a community link that you would like to share with the Board of Education? A partnership with a business or service organization that's benefiting students and/or residents? If you do, contact the Community Relations Office at 604-3007.

Retention or promotion?

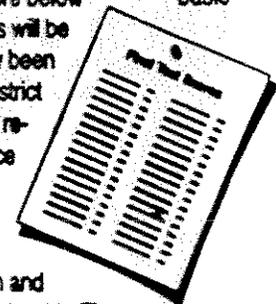
Neither retention nor social promotion is in the best interests of students or society, Director of Instructional Services Kate Hardiman-Frank recently told Board of Education members. Hardiman-Frank said that students who are socially promoted and/or retained often never catch up academically and continue to do poorly in later grades.

Under current Wisconsin state law, beginning in the 2002-03 school year, students in grades four and eight who score below basic proficiency in one or more WSAS test categories will be retained. Hardiman-Frank said that had the law been in effect in 1997-98, it would have cost the district more than \$800,000 to re-educate about 100 retained fourth and eighth graders with no assurance of improved learning.

The answer to social promotion and retention is to implement and support programs early in the education of students that are data driven and have proven to improve learning, Hardiman-Frank said. The district already has a number of such initiatives in place, including Early Literacy intervention, the Three-to-Get Ready program, and full-day kindergarten. Each building also has a School Improvement Plan.

In addition, Frank said, early release days for staff development and planning allow time for educators to learn new instructional strategies, refine current practices, align curriculum and collaborate with colleagues. Educators are continually pursuing ways to assure that more students will be successful in the classroom. "Continued learning opportunities for everyone - teachers, administrators and students - are essential to meet the challenges ahead," Hardiman-Frank said.

Continued focus on learning for all, she said, could make retention and social promotion a thing of the past.



People In The News

The following appointments were recently approved by the Board of Education: Ellen Stanton, cleaner at Wright; Deborah Hoffman, Irving educational assistant; Dorothy Stevens, Walker educational assistant; Patti Woodard, Central educational assistant; Susan Adkins, grade three teacher at Pershing.

The following resignations were recently approved by the Board of Education: Anne Gavigan, a teacher at Jefferson; and Shelly Schuster, a secretary at Lincoln.

The retirement of Administration Building secretary Helen Hecimovich was approved.

Did you know that Hale science teacher Kal Larson was a 1998 Kohf's Teacher Fellowship winner? We congratulate him and wish this year's entrants the best of luck.

District, tax group spar over referendum

Groups send out mailings
offering different opinions
on Nathan Hale expansion

By DAVE DALEY
of the Journal Sentinel staff

West Allis — The war of words over a \$3.5 million proposal to renovate Nathan Hale High School is heating up between the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District, which supports the renovations, and a taxpayer group long opposed to school referendum questions.

School district residents go to the polls Feb. 16 to vote on the renovations, and the West Allis Taxpayer's Association is questioning why a mailing outlining the district's position on the renovations only went to parents of school children, not to all voters.

"An issue this big, everyone should have gotten the mailing," says Nancy Haishuk, president of the West Allis Taxpayer's Association, added that it appears the school district hopes to limit voter turnout for the election.

Meanwhile, West Allis officials are questioning whether a flier mailed out by the taxpayers group meets the legal requirements of such mailings.

Haishuk Friday conceded her group's mailing should have included a disclaimer at the bottom identifying who was responsible for the mailing as well as the name of the treasurer of the West Allis Taxpayer's Association.

The City Clerk says we
Please see SCHOOL page 2

School/Sides spar in referendum

From page 1

didn't have the proper identification on the flier — and that was an oversight," Haishuk acknowledged.

But Haishuk said that in 1995, the only time WATA supported a school referendum question in the district, the group's fliers also did not contain the disclaimer and no one questioned WATA's mailing then.

"It looks a little fishy," Haishuk said.

The West Allis-West Milwaukee School District has sent a mailing to more than 5,000 parents in the district outlining the reasons for the proposed renovations. Because of a state law, is not advocating a yes vote on the referendum question.

"The school district cannot use district funds to advocate a position in a referendum," explained David Branback, the school district's business director.

Branback acknowledged the criticism from the West Allis Taxpayer's Association over the limited mailing, but said a mailing to the approximately 50,000 voters in the district was not feasible.

"That would be pretty crazy," Branback said.

If the referendum is approved, the \$3.5 million would be used to add a cafeteria and auxiliary gymnasium to Nathan Hale High School and remodel existing space there to enlarge the school's library and provide five new classrooms.



If the referendum passes, the school district also plans to use another \$1.5 million already on hand to renovate four elementary schools — Franklin, Jefferson, Longfellow and Pershing.

The school district's mailing emphasizes that it is in the best interest of the community to maintain school buildings that will save money in the long term and extend the life of district schools.

"Schools are places where our children live and grow, and we have an obligation to provide adequate spaces for them to learn," the mailing says.

The \$3.5 million, which would be borrowed, would mean another \$22 a year in property taxes for the owner of a \$100,000 home, or \$1.83 a month, the school district mailing says. But the West Allis Taxpayer's Association, in its own mailing to about 1,000 voters in the school district, vigorously opposes the renovation plan and criticizes what the group calls "the spend-crazed school board."

"Now, the floundering school leadership asks our citizens to make further sacrifice for a highly unnecessary expansion at Nathan Hale High School," the taxpayer's group says in its mailing.

By Dave Daley

2 NEIGHBORS — SOUTHWEST THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1999 MILWAUKEE



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May 7, 1999

Mr. Frank Kirschbraun
9805 W. Montana Avenue
West Allis, WI 53227

Re: West Allis-West Milwaukee School District Referendum

Dear Mr. Kirschbraun:

Your letter alleging deception by the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District has been forwarded to me for response. This office will not be taking any action in this matter because there does not appear to be any violation of election laws in the materials that you have provided.

You indicate that the school district engaged in deception by including four elementary schools in a referendum for a \$3.5 million improvement of a high school. However, there is no evidence in the documents that you sent that shows that referendum funding is not being used for the schools identified in the referendum. One of news article you provided, which was published before the referendum vote, indicates that the referendum funding would be used for the high school and existing funds would be used for the elementary schools. That article does not provide sufficient evidence of false representations or criminal activity.

I am sorry our office cannot be of assistance to you in this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara L. Oswald
Assistant Attorney General