



Mary Lazich

President
Wisconsin State Senate

**Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government
Senate Bill 391
November 23, 2015**

Thank you Chair LeMahieu for scheduling Senate Bill 391 (SB 391) a public hearing, and thank you committee members for attention to SB 391. SB 391 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, I believed this technical fix should be dealt with by the legislature rather than by administrative rule.

SB 391 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 SB 391. Thank you for your attention.



TYLER VORPAGEL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 27TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Senate Bill 391: relating to training period for election officials and terms for members of a board of canvassers

**Testimony of State Representative Tyler Vorpapel
Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government
November 23, 2015**

Thank you Chairman LeMahieu and committee members of Elections and Local Government for hearing Senate Bill 391 (SB 391). 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 SB 391, and am open for any questions if you should have them. Thank you for your consideration.

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

Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government

November 23, 2015

**Room 300 Southeast, State Capitol
Public Hearing**

Senate Bill 391

Chairperson LeMahieu and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 391. This bill would synchronize the training and certification terms of all election officials to run from January 1st of each even-numbered year to December 31st 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 1st of each odd-numbered year and ending on December 31st 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

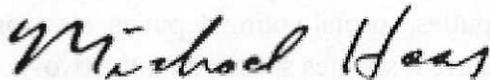
of other election officials. The Board recognized that synchronizing the terms of all election officials would reduce confusion and improve the consistency and efficiency of training requirements. Initiating the Board's rulemaking process led to discussions with the bill's author regarding establishing consistent terms in the statutes. While the Board has not had the opportunity to weigh 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,



Michael Haas
Elections Division Administrator
Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

608-266-8005

Michael.haas@wi.gov



COUNTY OF MANITOWOC

COUNTY CLERK

1010 South 8th St., Ste. 115
Manitowoc, WI 54220

Jamie J. Aulik
Manitowoc County Clerk

Telephone: (920) 683-4004
Email: jamieaulik@co.manitowoc.wi.us

DATE: November 23, 2015
TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government
FROM: Jamie J. Aulik, Manitowoc County Clerk
RE: Testimony supporting Senate Bill 313, Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 313, and Senate Bill 391

Honorable members of the Senate Committee on Elections and Local Government:

Below are my comments supporting SB-313, SA-1 to SB-313, and SB-391.

SB-313 relates to the method used by a county clerk to notify town clerks of certain county zoning actions. At present, counties are required to use a certified mail process to notify towns of actions relating to zoning. I support this bill because it would save time, money, and generally modernize the notification process by allowing counties to email materials to the town clerk so long as we receive confirmation of receipt.

SA-1 to SB-313 would amend the requirement of a town clerk to confirm receipt of zoning materials from five days to two days. If two days elapsed without receiving notification of receipt from the town clerk, the county would send the materials via certified mail. I support this change because if this bill were enacted as amended, our office would not only email the materials to the town clerk but follow up with a phone call to let the know to check their email. In my county, all of our town clerks are part-time and I know they would appreciate the heads-up from our office and subsequently check their email.

SB-391 relates to the training period for election officials and terms for members of a board of canvassers. I support this bill because at present, municipal clerks and other election officials have staggered terms for training and appointment which oftentimes creates unnecessary confusion for these important election officials. This bill would clean up current statutes by synchronizing their training, certification, and terms of appointment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the above bills. If there are any questions, I'm more than willing to attempt to answer them.

Very respectfully,

Jamie J. Aulik
Manitowoc County Clerk