



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN  
EDUCATION NETWORK

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To: Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections

Re: Opposition to Assembly Bill 54

The League of Women Voters opposes AB 54, which limits the ability of municipal clerks to serve their constituents and the opportunity for citizens to cast a ballot. This bill limits the hours that clerks may hold for in-person absentee voting before an election. It bans evening and weekend hours for early voting and limits total hours to no more than 40 hours per week in a two-week period prior to the election.

In Wisconsin our local election officials are known for their commitment to helping every qualified voter to cast a ballot. This bill does not uphold this tradition of public service. It does not set a minimum level of service, but rather a maximum level at which clerks can serve their constituents. This proposal would reduce the opportunities for voters across the state who have daytime jobs, child or elder care commitments, or who travel frequently.

Proponents claim AB 54 would create uniformity around the state, but it would not. By treating all municipalities equally, it does not treat voters equally. The bill favors favor voters who live in small municipalities where a clerk serves a couple of hundred residents rather than a couple hundred thousand.

Limiting early voting to business hours also would complicate the jobs of the many part-time municipal clerks in our state who have "day jobs" and must perform their clerk duties off-hours. How will they serve their constituents, who also might work during business hours?

AB 54 would impose a statewide, cookie-cutter solution to a nonexistent problem.

What have Wisconsin voters have done to deserve yet another restrictive voting law? What problem would AB 54 solve? Wisconsin consistently ranks near the top nationally for clean, efficiently administered elections with high voter participation. Despite federal and state scrutiny of our elections in the past few years, we are not aware of problems related to early voting hours in our state.

We urge you to reject AB 54, which needlessly limits the ability of local clerks to serve their constituents and restricts voting.

Thank you.