

Wisconsin Voters Can Feel Confident in Our Elections

Written by League Women Voters WI, Andrea Kaminski
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/voter-us-elections-s5.jpg>



One Presidential candidate is calling on supporters to become poll watchers because he says there will be massive cheating. The claim is false, there is no evidence of voter impersonation in Wisconsin. But this rhetoric could cause voter intimidation at the polls.

MADISON - While election observers are nothing new, this may be the first time we are seeing a Presidential candidate calling on supporters to become poll watchers because he says there will be massive cheating. The greatest danger of this rhetoric is not that it is false, although there is virtually no evidence of voter impersonation in Wisconsin. It's that it will keep people from voting.

Wisconsin voters should not be intimidated because we have safeguards to prevent observers from disrupting the voting process. In our state, election observers must sign in with their name, address and affiliation, if any. They may not wear buttons or clothing referring to a candidate or party. They must stay in a designated area, and they may not speak directly to voters, photograph voters or poll lists, or interfere with the voting process. If they have a concern, they need to address it with the Chief Inspector, and if they violate these rules, the Chief can have them removed.

Any observer who wants to challenge a person's right to vote will have to state under oath what specific information they have indicating the individual is not qualified to vote. "She looks too young" or "his name sounds foreign" are not acceptable charges.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin places observers in the polls, and their reports provide valuable information about how new laws and procedures affect voters. We welcome anyone to volunteer as an observer. You can sign up at www.lwvwi.org.

If more people spent time in the polls they would be impressed – as our volunteers are – by the high level of professionalism of our election officials and the rigorous safeguards that ensure a fair election. That's why Wisconsin voters can feel confident their polling place will be well

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managed and their ballot will be counted.

Andrea Kaminski is executive director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, a nonpartisan organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. The League welcomes women and men across the state as members. With 18 local Leagues in Wisconsin and 800 affiliates across the country, the League is one of the nation's most trusted grassroots organizations. Follow @LWV_WI on Twitter.