

Reps. Sargent & Genrich Support Funding, Staff at WEC to Ensure Election Integrity

Written by Wisconsin Assembly, Britt Cudaback

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Reports confirm Wisconsin among states targeted for cyberattacks during 2016 election.

MADISON – State Representatives Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) and Eric Genrich (D-Green Bay) announced legislation today (LRB-4363/1) to reinstate provisions vetoed by Governor Walker in the 2017-2019 biennial budget that would have increased funding and staffing levels at the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC).



“The cornerstone of our democracy is ensuring the integrity of our elections and the democratic process,” said Sargent. “Between cyberattacks, redistricting, and voter restrictions, among other threats, the importance of fully funding and staffing the body charged with ensuring the fairness, impartiality, and security of our elections simply cannot be overstated.”

LRB-4363/1 would appropriate \$304,100 to the Wisconsin Elections Commission for five full-time equivalent staff positions, a provision in the budget that was support and passed by

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Republican members of the Joint Finance Committee [months ago](#) , but was among [99 provisions](#) vetoed by Governor Walker last week, ultimately cutting six jobs from the Commission.



“In the face of cynical attempts to undermine our Democracy, we cannot afford the Governor’s reckless attack on the Wisconsin Elections Commission,” said Genrich. “I thank Rep. Sargent for righting this wrong, and I am proud to join her in this effort.”

The introduction of LRB-4363/1 comes just days after the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [notified](#) the Wisconsin Elections Commission that Wisconsin was among the 21 states targeted in widespread hacking efforts by ‘Russian government cyber actors’ during the 2016 elections. Although DHS indicated the attacks on Wisconsin’s online voter registration system were unsuccessful, and have since indicated the attacks might have been aimed at another agency, the Elections Commission has pledged to direct resources and efforts to increase security and protection efforts.

“This is not a partisan proposal—this actually mirrors what Republicans voted to include in the budget in May—and I’m hopeful my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join us in supporting this legislation and acting swiftly to move this bill through the legislative process,” Sargent concluded.

The bill is currently being circulated for co-sponsorship. The period for co-sponsorship ends on October 13, 2017.