

## Wisconsin's Own Twilight Zone

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MADISON - The [dictionary](#) defines “twilight zone” as an “area just beyond ordinary legal and ethical limits” or alternatively as a “world of fantasy where things are not real” or a “situation or an idea that is unclear or confusing.”

All these definitions describe Wisconsin's State Capitol and those who rule the place at the moment.

A leading Republican lawmaker who sits on the Assembly Campaigns and Elections Committee [says “there's no question”](#) Wisconsin should dump the nonpartisan agency that oversees elections, campaign finances, lobbying and government ethics in favor of a partisan replacement modeled after the Federal Election Commission.



Republicans like state Representative **Joe Sanfelippo** are convinced Wisconsin's Government Accountability Board is biased because it did its job and joined with both Democratic and Republican prosecutors to investigate suspicious election campaign conduct.

The law school at Ohio State University has singled out the GAB as a [national model](#) that should be copied by other states and Wisconsin's largest newspaper calls it a “[model for impartiality](#)”

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Nevertheless, Sanfelippo insists “Wisconsin would be wise to follow the model of the Federal Election Commission and have state legislative leadership appoint” a new six-member board

replacing the GAB.

Wise clearly means two entirely different things to Sanfelippo and the business-oriented Bloomberg news service. In an [editorial](#) published in recent days, Bloomberg said: “No agency better represents Washington’s dysfunction than the FEC.” The editorial went on to say the commission is “hopelessly and endlessly deadlocked” and noted that as the amount of money spent on campaigns has increased candidates, parties and independent groups have been allowed to stretch the law with “virtual impunity” and “the agency’s impotence has become all the more embarrassing.”

You’d think such an assessment might dampen Representative Sanfelippo’s enthusiasm for creating a state-level version of the FEC in Wisconsin. You would think wrong. Sanfelippo still fantasizes about “following the FEC prototype . . . which guarantees greater transparency and compliance for all residents and public officials.”

Representative Sanfelippo is in that fifth dimension Rod Serling always used to talk about.

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