Wisconsin Election Integrity
to make sure elections reflect the will of the people

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Contact: Karen McKim, 608-212-5079 or Liz Whitlock, 262-705-5486

Citizens call on WEC: Bring election auditing to Wisconsin in 2018

Waunakee, WI- Thursday June 7 - A nonpartisan citizens' group is asking the Wisconsin Elections Commission to require prompt voting-machine audits after this year's elections.

"Even if the WEC orders timely audits, Wisconsin's election security will still lag many other states," explained Karen McKim, the group's spokesperson. "But would-be hackers will be put on notice that they might get caught before any winners are officially declared. That's an improvement over what we have now."

Wisconsin has the paper ballots needed for audits, and state law has required that voting-machine audits follow November general elections since 2006. But in the past, the State has allowed local officials to delay the audits until after they've declared election results final. In addition, only around 100 of the state's approximately 3,800 voting machines have been audited. That practice "leaves the state open to undetected hacking and other Election Day problems," according to a national report released in February by the Center for American Progress.

More than 90% of Wisconsin's votes are counted by computers, including those marked on paper ballots. But little is known about pre-election security. The voting systems are not managed by the WEC, but by private companies and local election officials. No federal or state agency monitors their security practices.

McKim isn't concerned with the quality of security before elections. "It's not realistic to expect local clerks to be IT security pros," she said. "But they do have our marked ballots. If they use them to check the computer-tabulated results, messing with Wisconsin elections would be a waste of any hacker's time. And any accidental miscounts caused by glitches would be corrected before anyone is officially declared the winner."

The group has asked the WEC to discuss the matter at their June 11 meeting. The full letter, with detail of the group's proposal, can be viewed at https://bit.ly/2sJ9Xq8

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Wisconsin Election Integrity *is a nonpartisan citizens group, working since 2012 to make sure Wisconsin's election reflect the will of the people. Their work has included public demonstrations of nationally recommended audit methods in Dane County in 2014 and 2015, and a citizen's hand count in November 2017 that documented that Racine County certified incorrect results in the 2016 presidential election—in both the regular canvass and in the recount. More information is on Facebook and at WisconsinElectionIntegrity.org.*