

# Lunch and Learn: The Spring Election Matters!

March 19, 2025



# About the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition

- ▶ A non-partisan effort to help ensure full participation in the electoral process of voters with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places.
- ▶ The Coalition is coordinated by Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities. Members include people with disabilities, over 40 community agencies, and other partners.
  - Check out our resources: <https://disabilityvote.org/>
  - Follow us on Facebook and Instagram
  - Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline: 844-347-8683 or email [info@disabilityvote.org](mailto:info@disabilityvote.org)

# Why is voting important?

- ▶ Elected officials make decisions on things that are important to us.
- ▶ It shows elected officials that we care and are paying attention.
- ▶ It may change the way that an elected official votes on an issue.
- ▶ Local elections are as important as national.
- ▶ It's your civic responsibility!

**If people with disabilities voted at the same rate as people without disabilities - that would be 2 million more votes!!**  
([Rutgers Disability and Voter Turnout in the 2022 Elections](#))

# April 1<sup>st</sup> Spring Election: What's on the Ballot?

- ▶ Wisconsin Supreme Court
- ▶ Wisconsin State Superintendent
- ▶ 1 Constitutional Amendment Question
- ▶ Circuit Court in many counties
- ▶ Other Local Elections (school board, mayor, city council, alderpersons)

View your ballot at My Vote Wisconsin:

<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Whats-On-My-Ballot>

# WI Supreme Court

- ▶ The final say in protecting our rights guaranteed by our state's constitution.
- ▶ Makes critical decisions about our rights like legislative districts and maps, voting rights, reproduction rights, access to healthcare, etc.
- ▶ Their decisions shape policies that directly impact our communities.
- ▶ Justices serve 10-year terms and hear about 60 cases/year.
- ▶ The new Justice may be a “swing” vote; many cases are decided on a 3-4 decision.

# Supreme Court Candidates (alphabetically)

- ▶ Susan Crawford
- ▶ Brad Schimel
- ▶ Know the candidates:
  - **Vote 411:** [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)
  - **Ballotpedia:** [Ballotpedia.org](http://Ballotpedia.org)

DVC fact sheet:

[Wisconsin Supreme Court Fact Sheet](#)

# How do I evaluate judicial candidates?

- ▶ Consider what issues are important to you.
- ▶ What qualities do you want in a leader?
- ▶ Which candidates' judicial philosophies align with your values?
- ▶ How have the candidates voted in past cases?
- ▶ Judicial elections are non-partisan.  
Do your homework: learn about the candidates!

# WI State Superintendent

- ▶ Oversee public schools and libraries.
- ▶ Evaluate school performance.
- ▶ Ensures schools meet their IDEA responsibilities for students with disabilities.
- ▶ Distributes funding to schools and libraries.
- ▶ Their decisions shape policies that directly impact our communities.

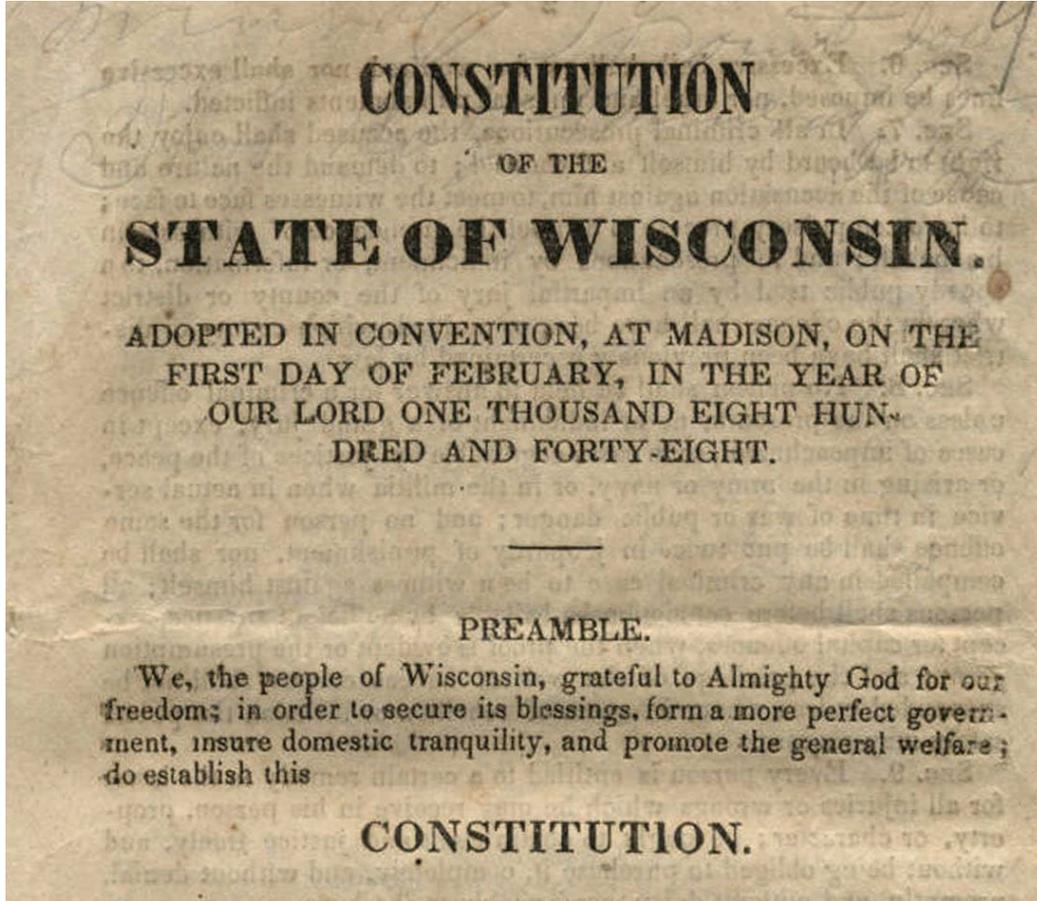
[DVC Fact Sheet: WI State Superintendent of Public Instruction](#)

# State Superintendent Candidates (alphabetically)

- ▶ Brittany Kinser
- ▶ Dr. Jill Underly (incumbent)
- ▶ Know the candidates:
  - **Vote 411:** [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)
  - **Ballotpedia:** [Ballotpedia.org](http://Ballotpedia.org)

# Resources to learn about the candidates

- ▶ [Vote 411 Wisconsin](#): Voter information from League of Women Voters, including non-partisan candidate information. Includes links to candidate websites.
- ▶ [Ballotpedia](#): View your ballot with links to candidate information.
- ▶ Candidate interviews and other coverage in the media. Candidate forums when available.
- ▶ Candidate's websites.
- ▶ [WisconsinEye](#): Newsmaker Interviews and Forum coverage (you will need to set up a free account)



# Constitutional Amendment

# Overview

A **constitutional amendment** is a change to the constitution. It is an addition or alteration to the constitution.

In Wisconsin, a constitutional amendment must pass the Legislature in two consecutive sessions and be approved by voters in a statewide election before it is officially added to the state Constitution.

# April 1 - Constitutional Amendment

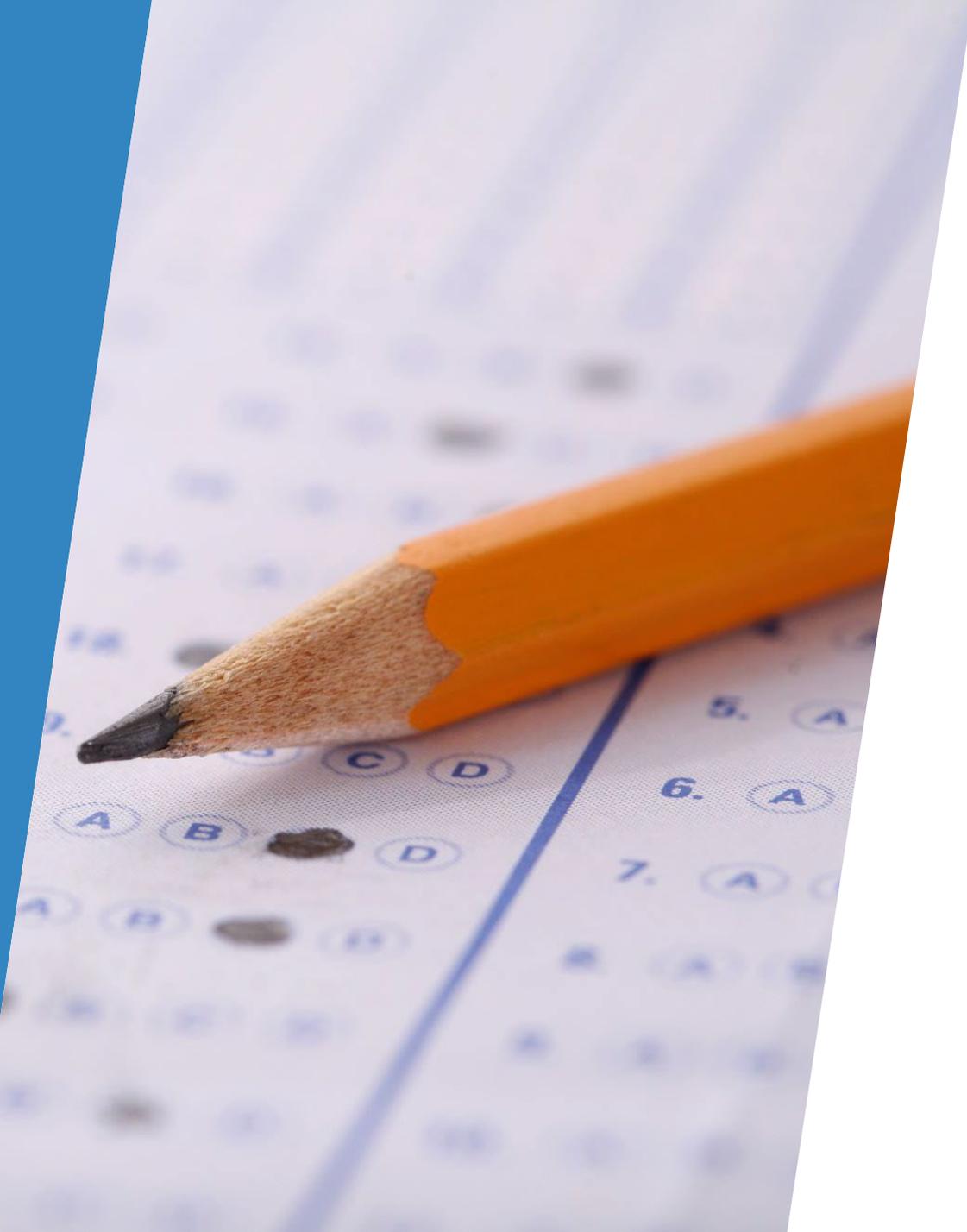
## ✘ Question:

Question: “Photographic identification for voting. Shall section 1m of article III of the constitution be created to require that voters present valid photographic identification verifying their identity in order to vote in any election, subject to exceptions which may be established by law?”

### What does a “Yes” or a “No” vote mean?

A **“yes” vote** - means you want to change the constitution to add language to require valid photo identification to vote. It also authorizes the state legislature to pass laws to determine what qualifies as valid photo identification and exceptions to the requirement.

A **“no” vote** - means that you do not want the constitution to change. Photo ID will still be required since there is a separate law requiring it.



# Vote NO!

- Photo ID laws create obstacles for disabled voters
- Wisconsin already has a photo ID law
- Making laws through constitutional amendment is divisive. Working together in lawmaking is best.

# Resources to Learn About the Constitutional Amendment Questions and Referendum

- ▶ View your ballot and these proposals at [My Vote Wisconsin](#)
- ▶ [League of Women Voters](#)
- ▶ **Wisconsin 2025 Ballot Measures via Ballotpedia:**  
[https://ballotpedia.org/Wisconsin\\_2025\\_ballot\\_measures](https://ballotpedia.org/Wisconsin_2025_ballot_measures)
- ▶ [Vote 411 Wisconsin](#)

*Note: Changing the constitution is a big deal. If you aren't sure about the choices, it's okay to leave it blank.*

# Wisconsin Circuit Courts

- ▶ Circuit Courts are the trial courts for civil and criminal cases in the Wisconsin court system.
- ▶ Each of the 240 circuit court judges are elected and serve six-year terms.
- ▶ Disability related cases addressed by Circuit Court include guardianships and civil commitments. The courts address a wide range of cases addressing issues such as family law disputes, public safety, voting rights, and other civil rights issues.
- ▶ DVC fact sheet: [Wisconsin Circuit Court Fact Sheet](#)

Local governments make decisions that directly affect our local communities. They are accountable to you and your neighbors.

## They Make Decisions About

Public transit 	School Quality 	Affordable housing 	Public health 
Policing and public safety 	Sanitation 	Water quality 	Economic development and job training programs 
Planning and zoning 	Libraries 	How millions of local tax dollars are spent 	Election administration 

## Why vote in local elections?

Local officials are supposed to represent the community, but if only a fraction of voters vote them in, then only a small part of the community's interests are represented. When more voters cast their votes, the people who are elected are more reflective of the community. This means that they are likely to be more responsive.

## Which local offices are elected?

Which local offices are elected varies by municipality. However, they can include:

- Mayor
- City Council
- School Board
- City Clerk
- City Treasurer
- Municipal Judge
- Coroner
- Sanitation Commissioner



# Local Elections Matter

- ▶ Review your ballot in advance to see what local elections are listed.
- ▶ Depending on where you live, you may be voting for mayor, county executive, school board, city council, alderpersons, etc.

Check out our factsheets

- [Local Elections Factsheet](#)
- [County Board of Supervisors Fact Sheet](#)
- [City Council Fact Sheet](#)
- [School Board Fact Sheet](#)

# Important Registration Deadlines

**For the 2025 Spring Election, you must register:**

- ▶ Online or by mail: **Deadline passed**
- ▶ In person at Municipal Clerk's Office: **March 28**
- ▶ At your polling place: **April 1**

# Important Absentee Voting Deadlines

**For the 2025 Spring Election, you must:**

- ▶ request your [Absentee Ballot](#) by **March 27**
- ▶ return your absentee Ballot by **April 1, 8 p.m.**

Absentee In-Person (early voting) may begin **March 18.**

Learn more at [myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Vote-Absentee-In-Person](https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Vote-Absentee-In-Person)

# Returning Your Absentee Ballot

- ▶ **Return your ballot ASAP.** Allow at least 7 business days. Mail delivery can be slow.
- ▶ **If you need assistance returning your ballot:** Voters with a disability may request assistance with mailing or delivering their ballot from anyone who is not their employer or a labor union representative.
- ▶ **Dropboxes** are allowed. This varies by community.
- ▶ **Reminder:** Your municipal clerk must have your ballot by 8 PM on election day for your vote to count. Locations for returning your absentee ballot vary by municipality. Check with your clerk. Find their contact information at [myvote.wi.gov/my-Municipal-Clerk](https://myvote.wi.gov/my-Municipal-Clerk).

# Voting in person

## Be Prepared

- ▶ Early voting may start March 18. Check at [myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Vote-Absentee-In-Person](https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Vote-Absentee-In-Person)
- ▶ Polls are open on April 1<sup>st</sup> from 7 AM - 8 PM
- ▶ Check your polling place at [Find My Polling Place \(wi.gov\)](https://www.wi.gov/Find-My-Polling-Place)
- ▶ **Bring your photo ID**
- ▶ Preview your ballot: [What's On My Ballot \(wi.gov\)](https://www.wi.gov/What-s-On-My-Ballot)
- ▶ Check your voter registration.
- ▶ Know your rights.
- ▶ Curbside voting: call ahead.
- ▶ Need a ride? Plan ahead. Our [Rides to the Polls](#) may list providers.

## Questions, problems or complaints?

- ▶ Call DRW Voter Hotline 844-347-8683 or email [info@disabilityvote.org](mailto:info@disabilityvote.org)



## What are my key rights as a voter with a disability?

- ▶ Right to vote **privately and independently**.
- ▶ Right to **access** the polling place.
- ▶ Right to ask for **accommodations**, such as a chair to sit in rather than standing in line, signature guide, magnifying glass, assistance stating your name and address.
- ▶ Right to tools to help poll workers interact with deaf and hard of hearing voters: a pen and paper or an easel for announcements.
- ▶ Right to **assistance** marking your ballot (just not your employer or your union representative)
- ▶ Right to use the **accessible voting machine** at your polling place.

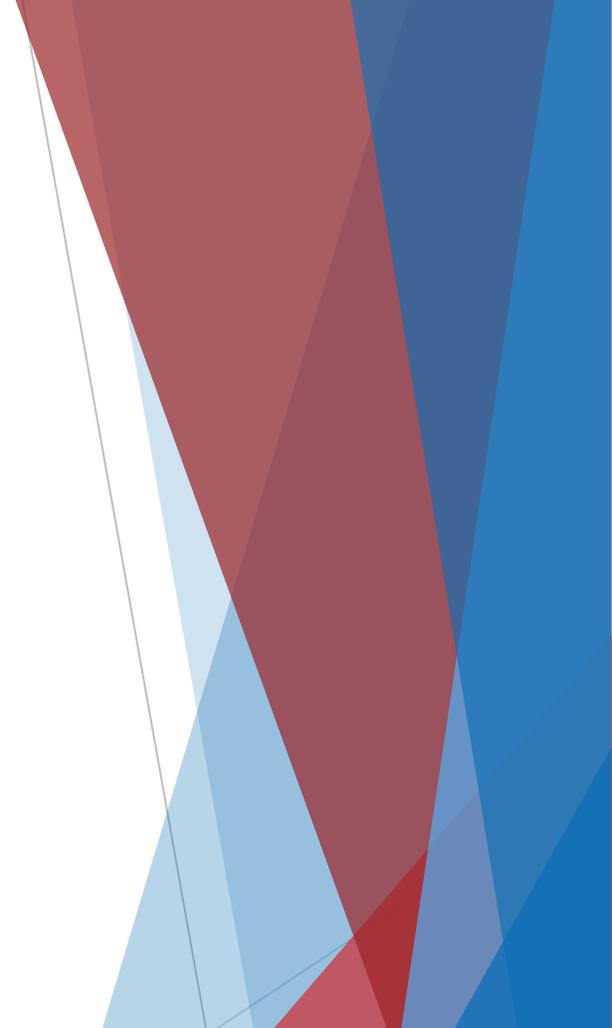
# Use the accessible voting machine

- ▶ Each polling place is required to have at least one accessible voting system.
- ▶ The accessible voting system must provide the opportunity for voters to vote privately and independently.
- ▶ Anyone can use the accessible voting system.
- ▶ Elections officials must make sure it's functioning properly in each election, and that election officials are trained to operate them.
- ▶ Be an ally! Consider using the accessible voting machine. It increases awareness for other voters and for poll workers.



# More rights

- ▶ **File a complaint** if you feel your rights have been violated. The DRW Voter Hotline can assist you.
- ▶ If you make a mistake, you can **request another ballot** from the election officials.
- ▶ You may bring a **“notes sheet”** into the polling place.
- ▶ No one should tell you how to vote.



**DISABILITY RIGHTS  
ARE CIVIL RIGHTS**

# What is curbside voting?

- ▶ Required by law for any voter who cannot enter the polling place due to a disability.
- ▶ The WEC believes that individuals who are immunocompromised or have symptoms of COVID-19 are eligible to curbside vote.
- ▶ Curbside voting should also be available during in-person absentee voting at the clerk's office or alternate site.
- ▶ Contact your Municipal Clerk in advance of Election Day to determine the process to access curbside voting (e.g. honk your horn, ring a doorbell, call a phone number).

# Can I still vote if I have a guardian?

- ▶ In Wisconsin, a person under guardianship retains the right to vote unless the court expressly removes it.
- ▶ To find out if you have the right to vote, ask the guardian to look at the “Determination and Order on Petition for Guardianship Due to Incompetency” (GN-3170) form.
  - A copy can be requested from Probate Court in their county (costs about \$2.00/copy).
- ▶ Contact their Municipal Clerk. The Clerk can check the list they receive from the state of individuals adjudicated incompetent and ineligible to vote.
- ▶ A person who has a guardian and has lost the right to vote may petition the court to restore their right to vote (Wis. Stat 54.64(2)(a)).
- ▶ See resources on voting and guardianship at [www.disabilityvote.org](http://www.disabilityvote.org).

# Voting Resources

## Disability Vote Coalition:

- Website: [www.disabilityvote.org](http://www.disabilityvote.org)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/wisconsin Disability Vote](http://www.facebook.com/wisconsin Disability Vote)

## DRW Voter Hotline:

- 844-DIS-VOTE (347-8683) or email [info@disabilityvote.org](mailto:info@disabilityvote.org)

Your municipal clerk: [myvote.wi.gov/en-us/MyMunicipalClerk](http://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/MyMunicipalClerk)

## Wisconsin Elections Commission

1-866-VOTE-WIS / [elections.wi.gov](http://elections.wi.gov) or email [elections@wi.gov](mailto:elections@wi.gov)

MyVoteWisconsin: [www.myvote.wi.gov](http://www.myvote.wi.gov)

## Photo ID

- Bring It to the Ballot: [www.bringit.wi.gov](http://www.bringit.wi.gov)
- Wisconsin DMV Voter ID hotline: 844-588-1069
- Voter ID Helpline: 608-285-2141

# What do I do if I need help or run into a problem?

Contact the *Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline*

844-DIS-VOTE (844-347-8683) or  
[info@disabilityvote.org](mailto:info@disabilityvote.org)

