

# Sen. Bernier, Colleagues: Release election bills

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(Madison).... Senator Kathy Bernier (R-Chippewa Falls) joined Senators Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay), Alberta Darling (R-River Hills), and Duey Stroebel (R-Saukville) and Representatives Barb Dittrich (R-Oconomowoc), Cindi Duchow (R-Town of Delafield), and John Macco (R-Ledgeview) in introducing a slate of election reform bills today.

The non-partisan Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) conducted a [thorough audit](#) of the November 2020 election. In their report they made 30 recommendations to the staff of the Wisconsin Election Commission and included [18 items for legislative consideration](#). Similar recommendations were also made by the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty (WILL) following their [full investigation](#) into the November 2020 election. In certain cases, the improvements that were recommended by these reports had already been passed by the Legislature and unthinkably vetoed by a Governor who abdicated his duty to the citizens of this state.

The bills being brought forward today **do not** make it harder to vote. The bills **do not** disenfranchise any voter. They **do not** suppress votes, deny the right to vote, or rig the system. These bills **do** directly address the concerns brought forward by multiple credible and in-depth investigations.

“After every election, we figure out what didn’t work as planned and we fix it. These bills will fix the problems that have led to unprecedented questions about the last presidential election,” said Senator Bernier. “Anyone who opposes these bills falls into two camps; there is no other characterization: either they wish to impugn the integrity of our highly respected non-partisan audit bureau, or they wish to undermine faith in democracy by lying to the public about election administration for their own personal gain. I will not stand for either.”

The bills are formatted as follows:

- LRB-5268 deals with pre-election issues. It closely follows recommendations made from the Audit Bureau for clerk training, maintenance of voter registration records, and electronic voting equipment. It also takes preventative measures so that the voter disenfranchisement that local Democrat officials attempted in Milwaukee and Green Bay during the April 2020 elections cannot happen again.
- LRB-5269 deals with Election Day issues. The bill follows LAB recommendations for sections under to absentee ballots and electronic voting equipment. It clarifies the role of a Special Voting Deputy to ensure there can be no repeat of the confusion caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in nursing homes. It also follows the recommendation related to banning the use of private resources for election administration. It prohibits “ballot curing” but brings statewide fairness and transparency by stating directly in statute what specific information must be included on an absentee ballot certificate and requires that clerks notify the voter if their envelope must be corrected.
- LRB-5270 handles post-election issues. Formal complaints must be resolved within 60 days unless extended by a vote of a majority of WEC commissioners. The post-election audit practice will become more robust and the Legislative Audit Bureau will have a standing review of the audit already done by WEC.
- LRB-4680 deals directly with the classification of an “indefinitely confined” voter, a process that was highlighted in both investigations and was abused wittingly by Democrat county clerks and unwittingly by tens of thousands of regular Wisconsin voters. The bill is intended to return this practice to its original purpose by allowing those whose long-term physical condition would not allow them to vote in person at the polls. It modifies the definition of who is indefinitely confined to be those who “cannot travel independently without significant burden because of frailty, physical illness, or a disability that will last longer than one year.” In order to avoid the common mistake of obtaining the status accidentally, it requires the use of a separate form to apply for indefinitely confined status. Finally, it requires the indefinitely confined to provide a current photo ID if one is available to them. If not, it requires them to submit the last four digits of their Social Security Number along with a witness’s signature attesting to their identity.

These bills do not encompass every recommendation from LAB or WILL. Senator Bernier expects her colleagues to soon release additional bills related to those

reviews, the 2020 election, and various election issues that have been brought forward.