



WISCONSIN SENATE DEMOCRATS

DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Senator Wanggaard:

We strenuously object to SB 445/AB 446 being voted on by paper ballot rather than regular, in person executive session. Last week's public hearing, much like the earlier one in the Assembly, revealed deep disagreement among the public, including among the Jewish community, about the wisdom and potential impact of this legislation. A bill that is highly controversial, and one that implicates fundamental rights, including the right to free speech and the right to be safe from discriminatory conduct, must be fully vetted through the normal legislative process.

This hasty executive session via paper ballot deprives legislators of the opportunity to ask questions of legislative council, to hear others' questions and comments, to have discussions amongst each other, to offer and discuss amendments, and to debate the merits of the bill. Most importantly, it robs the public of their right to see their government in action, and to know that their concerns — however they feel about this bill — are being taken seriously by legislators.

This committee has too often abused the convenience of paper ballots, depriving committee members of our ability to do our jobs well, preventing debate and discussion, and shutting out the public. Paper ballots should not be used as a weapon to silence members of the minority party and grease the skids for controversial legislation that the majority party wants to sneak through under the radar. Too often, unfortunately, that is how this committee has operated.

We respectfully request that this bill be removed from the list of bills being voted on by paper ballot, and that moving forward, the committee dramatically reduce the number of paper ballots so that bills get due consideration and discussion. If the chair wishes to advance this bill, a public, in person, executive session should be scheduled.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelda Roys".

Kelda Roys
Wisconsin State Senate
District 26

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dora Drake".

Sen. Dora Drake
Wisconsin State Senate
District 4

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Latonya Johnson".

Sen. Latonya Johnson
Wisconsin State Senate
District 6