

To: Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections

Date: February 26, 2013

From: Paul Malischke, malischke@yahoo.com

**Subject: AB – 18, Residency of Pollworkers**

Please reject AB-18, which would ease the current residency requirements so that poll workers may generally be a resident of the **county** in which they serve as poll workers.

Giving clerks more flexibility to recruit pollworkers is a worthy goal.

However, this bill has an underlying negative effect. The political parties, using their existing ability to name pollworkers, would be able to force a municipality to take pollworkers from outside the municipality. Since political parties may designate pollworkers under s. 7.30(4), they could name pollworkers from outside the municipality, even if the municipal clerk is able to easily find capable pollworkers from within the municipality.

Municipalities and municipal clerks should not be forced to relinquish local control of their elections.

Please introduce an alternative bill, or a substitute amendment, with these characteristics:

- Require all political party nominees under 7.30(4) to be from within the municipality.
- Ease the current requirements so that poll workers selected by the clerk may be a resident of the county.
- The chief inspector must be from the municipality.

In addition, consider allowing high school students to work within the county. Since high schools often draw students from several municipalities, allowing them to work county-wide might facilitate their recruitment. The current statutory qualifications for high school students as pollworkers ensure high quality, regardless of where they are assigned.

A bill with these characteristics would have the advantageous features for our clerks and municipalities, without the negative effects. For clerks that are able to get pollworkers from within the municipality, there would be no change from the existing situation.