



Big Money Bulletin

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Come one, come all

Get Big Money



Out of Politics!

December 2004

Edition No. 41

On the Web:
www.wisdc.org



WDC pushes 'Power to the Voter' agenda

In response to deepening political corruption, a rash of uncontested races for state offices and growing polarization at the State Capitol, the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign issued a new call for reform last month, offering a five-step program to rehabilitate democracy in Wisconsin.

The "Power to the Voter" agenda includes:

- *Truth in campaigning* requiring full disclosure of all election-related activities;
- *Voter-owned elections* featuring public financing of state election campaigns to level the playing field for candidates and limit special interest influence;
- *Unleashed watchdogs* in the form of an independent agency to rigorously enforce ethics and campaign finance laws;
- *Tamper-proof voting districts* through the creation of an independent authority to handle legislative redistricting; and
- *Free choice voting* that allows the true preferences of voters to be reflected on the ballot.

More information about the Democracy Campaign's reform agenda for 2005 is available on WDC's web site at www.wisdc.org.

Take Action to Reclaim Democracy!

Go to www.wisdc.org/powertothevoteraction.html

Contact Governor Jim Doyle and your state legislators and tell them you want clean government and real democracy. Specifically, tell them you want: 1) full disclosure of election activities; 2) campaign finance reform providing public financing of state election campaigns; 3) a politically independent authority to rigorously enforce ethics and campaign finance laws; 4) an independent commission to draw fair and competitive voting districts; and 5) voting reforms like instant runoff voting that allow the true preferences of voters to be expressed.

Contact Governor Doyle by calling **608-266-1212** or e-mailing his office at governor@wisconsin.gov. Contact your legislators by calling the toll-free legislative hotline at **800-362-9472** (266-9960 in Madison). For an e-mail directory for legislators, go to www.legis.state.wi.us/.

State inks secret contract to outsource voter list development

The state Elections Board entered into a contract on November 12 with the global management consulting and outsourcing firm Accenture to create Wisconsin's first statewide list of registered voters. The contract is estimated to be worth \$14 million.

Accenture is a lightning rod because of its voting systems contracts in other states, including Florida where the company had a hand in the infamous purge of supposed felons from the state's voter list. The firm was formerly known as Andersen Consulting, part of Arthur Andersen of Enron fame. And Accenture's parent company is based in Bermuda to avoid paying U.S. taxes.

The Elections Board never voted publicly to approve the Accenture contract, which was signed by its

Accenture's voter list contract is part of a much larger trend in state government – cutting the number of state workers even if it ends up costing taxpayers more for state services.

executive director. The Board also never voted to authorize a Request for Proposals (RFP) soliciting bids for the work by private companies. The RFP was sent out to potential vendors on May 6.

The creation of a centralized voter registration system and a statewide voter list was federally mandated under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). Wisconsin is to receive \$50 million in federal funds to implement HAVA's requirements. Among the law's many provisions, each state is required to create a central voter list by January 1, 2006.

State information technology specialists have estimated they could develop a statewide voter list for \$500,000. Private voter list experts based in Wisconsin echo the state employees' claims, putting the cost of developing such a list at well under \$1 million.

Elections Board officials bristle at those suggestions, arguing that it is not possible for state employees to do the work because there are not enough qualified information technology specialists in the state

workforce. When pressed for justification of their position, board members and staff cite a \$180,000 study by Virchow Krause, a private consulting firm that specializes in government outsourcing.

Another private consulting firm, Deloitte & Touche, has been described by Elections Board officials as the "project manager" for the development of the new voter registration system.

The Doyle Administration has sought to distance itself from the controversial pact with Accenture, arguing that the Elections Board is an independent agency that acted on its own. The governor has emphasized that he has "no direct authority" over the board's decisions and does not want to insert himself into the growing controversy for fear of making it "political."

The administration's claims are undercut by Elections Board officials who say Doyle's Department of Administration (DOA) was involved with the voter list project "since day one" and "every step of the way" in what they describe as a two-year process. They also say DOA played a central role in negotiating the terms of the contract with Accenture.

In reality, the privatization of voter list development is part of a much larger trend in state government. Governor Doyle made a campaign promise to eliminate 10,000 state jobs, scaling back the size of the state workforce to 1986 levels. He has aggressively promoted outsourcing state government services, even when the cost of contracting state work out to a private company exceeds the cost of having state employees do the work.

For example, in August WDC called attention to a contract paying a private company whose top executives made big campaign donations to the governor nearly \$80 an hour to maintain a road sign inventory that had been kept by a temporary state employee earning just over \$11 hourly.

Say No to Privatizing Elections! Tell 'em to cancel the Accenture contract

Call the State Elections Board at **608-266-8005** or e-mail the board at:
seb@seb.state.wi.us.

Call Governor Jim Doyle at **608-266-1212** or e-mail his office at:
governor@wisconsin.gov.

WDC to take reform message to the airwaves with animated TV ad

To reach a broader audience with a stinging indictment of dysfunctional state government and a call to action on behalf of political reform, the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign will begin airing a television ad in several state TV markets starting in late January.



The animated 30-second ad features award-winning political cartoonist Mike Konopacki's depiction of a fiddler with two heads – an elephant's and a donkey's – and a Capitol engulfed in flames.

The ad can be viewed on WDC's web site. To see it, go to www.wisdc.org/stopfiddling.html.

Here is the ad's script:

NARRATOR: There are a lot of burning issues at the state Capitol...
billion-dollar deficits...
vanishing manufacturing jobs...
a health care crisis...
and felony charges against legislative leaders.
It's time to put out the fires...
and stop this incessant fiddling.
Demand clean government and REAL democracy.
Contact the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
www.wisdc.org
888-455-4260

HELP US BUY AIRTIME! GIVE TODAY!

How many people see this unique ad will depend on our members and supporters. **We hope we can count on your help to bring this message to every corner of the state.** Use the enclosed reply card and envelope to make a donation payable to the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign Education Project.

YOU'RE INVITED....

People's Legislature – January 4, 2005

Feeling politically homeless? Think it's about time for a second political party? Itchin' for a fight?

Then you need to be part of the first *People's Legislature*. This unique convention – sponsored by the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, Fighting Bob, Inc. and the Center for Democratic Action – will be held on **Tuesday, January 4** at the **Dane County Expo Center** (Exhibition Hall) in **Madison** from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The idea is simple: What if ordinary citizens had a voice at the Capitol? What would the Legislature's agenda look like if it represented voting constituents instead of wealthy special interest donors who bankroll election campaigns?

Our aim is to begin building a home for the politically homeless in Wisconsin. It is our hope that this multi-partisan assembly of folks from all across the state and from different walks of life can be a spark that ignites a populist prairie fire – a homegrown political movement to take back our government and restore our democracy.

We know that no one-day gathering can do justice to all of the issues that are on the minds of people who feel their voices are not being heard. But what we all have in common is that none of us will be

To register online for the *People's Legislature*, go to www.wisdc.org.

satisfied with what government does on our respective issues until we do something about how our government conducts business.

There is work to be done, and we ask you to join us in making history by taking part in Wisconsin's first *People's Legislature*. Come build with us!

Please take a minute to register today. When you register online, you'll have an opportunity to identify what you think the most important problems facing Wisconsin are and how we should go about solving them.

And don't stop there. Tell people you know about this special event. And bring a friend or two or three on January 4. See you then!

Come to the People's Legislature

Who: Everyone is welcome, particularly the politically homeless.

When: January 4, 2005
11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Where: Dane County Expo Center
Exhibition Hall
1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Madison

\$5 donation requested, day of event, price includes parking.

Sponsored by the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, Fighting Bob, Inc. and the Center for Democratic Action.

From the executive director

In a few weeks, hundreds of people from every corner of our state will be taking part in a first-of-its-kind gathering for an age-old purpose: to make democracy work.

The Democracy Campaign is sponsoring something we're calling the *People's Legislature* because our democracy is in deep trouble. Wisconsin is not Wisconsin anymore, and we want our state back. We want – and all of us need – a return to open and accessible government and a healthy, functioning democracy that allows the collective voice of the people to be heard loud and clear at the Capitol.

I hope you will join us as we start building a home for the politically homeless and a new homegrown political movement to take back our government and restore our democracy.

— *Mike McCabe*



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