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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** Have with me today. The clerk from the City of Superior. Camilla Ramos. Camilla, would you please introduce yourself.

[00:00:08] **Speaker 2** Sir? Thank you, Megan. Hello, everyone. As Megan mentioned, my name is Camilla Ramos. And while I'm relatively new to the position of city clerk, I've been assisting with administering elections since I joined the city clerk's office in January of 2016. That was the same month with vote was launched as memory serves. Megan Yup, that's correct.

[00:00:29] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Thanks so much and thanks so much for being here to lend your expertize to this discussion. Today is the second installment of our summer media availabilities, and today Camila and I will be talking about the subject of voter record maintenance. Now, this is really a topic that I believe is a key component of both what local and statewide election officials do. Since was vote, our statewide voter registration system is such a big part of that. We are going to be first providing a brief overview of what that system is and what its capabilities are. As some of you that have been with us for these before know, I view these as opportunities to educate the media and the public about some of the mechanics, about the elections process. And so we will get to all of your questions. But I think it's really important that first we learn a bit about how elections work here in our states. Again, both for the media as you're writing your stories and for the public as they have questions about these processes. So maintaining the state's voter records and voter history is a crucial component of election security. Keeping accurate records on each voter in the state really helps us to ensure that every voter participating in our elections is indeed an eligible voter. This ensures that our elections are conducted accurately and with integrity. Keeping detailed voter records and a complete voter history also helps prevent election fraud. But we'll get to that a little bit later in this presentation. As always, at the conclusion of this presentation, we'll take any questions that you may have, and we'll also preview some of our upcoming media availabilities. We'll also be sending out some of the data we touch upon during this presentation so that so that you have that available to you. So please look for that in your inbox later today. All right. So an introduction to our statewide voter registration database. So the goal of today's media availability is to provide that overview of how Wisconsin maintains accurate voter data, as well as to dispel some of the common misconceptions that have entered the public discussion about voter data. We're covering these topics because maintaining accurate voter data is fundamental to the accuracy and the integrity of the vote. Since we're talking about voter data, particularly voter registration data in voter participation history and how we maintain that data, it's important to first remind ourselves why we register to vote and why we hold on to that data. There are multiple reasons for registering to vote, but there are a few important ones that I wanted to mention today. Voter Registration. Keeping accurate personal records of each voter helps us identify and differentiate between each eligible Wisconsin voter and whether they have already exercised their right to vote to participate in a particular election in a similar fashion. We register voters because it helps us ensure that Wisconsin's election laws are being followed properly. Voter registration helps to ensure that each voter cast a ballot in the proper jurisdiction. When you get registered to vote, you're also assigned to the districts and wards and boundaries within what candidates, what contests you're eligible to vote in. That voter, if the voter meets all the eligibility requirements, such as they're an adult citizen and not curvy, certainly are currently serving a felony sentence. Then they're able to register to vote, ensuring each voter meets the eligibility requirements and that each person votes just once per election. Are also fundamental, of course, to ensuring credible, accurate elections.

[00:04:35] **Speaker 2** So how do we hold on to all this voter voter registration data in a way that makes it meaningful? Let me introduce you to with the Wisconsin state wide and comprehensive voter registration database and election management system. What does that mean? Starting with the word comprehensive was without contains almost the entirety of Wisconsin's electorate. I'm sorry. Electronic voter registration and elections. Administration history. This is arguably its most powerful and useful function. When anyone asks what happened. It is a feature that provides the answer. When we talk about registration and elections history, we are talking about the voter's name, address, date of birth, registration history, along with other information about the elections that that person has made it in and where and even whether that person voted in person or via absentee ballot. But our records do not include. A voters political party preferences. Voters are often pleased to learn that the state of Wisconsin does not record or track their political party affiliation. That there is no feel for such data in our voter registration system. Nor is there any way for us to track how a person voted. Wisconsin voters are entitled to a secret ballot in addition to information containing. In addition to containing information for every active registered voter, the whistle vote system also includes inactive records of every previously registered voter in the state. Inactive records go back more than a decade to the inception of our first statewide registration system. With Vote also includes voter records from jurisdictions which had their own independent voter registration systems in place long before the statewide system was created. Some of those legacy records remain active today because some voters have not moved or otherwise had a need to update their voter registration information since they initially registered. It is important to note, however, that the majority of those legacy records are now inactive. And like all other inactive records in Wisconsin, those these voters names and addresses will never be listed in the whole book. So no one will ever be able to use them to cast a ballot either illegally or in error. Also, because some municipalities didn't track date of birth or initial registration dates for their voters before the statewide system was created. A clear indication that a voter record is a legacy record is if it lists the data, the voter's date of birth as January one, 1994, the voter's registration date as January one, 1918. These were the dates we used when we were pulling their data into our voter registration system when it was created. In addition to housing voter data without being a comprehensive elections management system, also tracks legislative voting districts and aides, clerks in planning and administering local elections. I want to make sure to take a moment to clear up some confusion about our statewide voter database and some other common terms you might hear, such as voter rolls or public. Let's start with with the Wisconsin state wide voter database. When we mentioned our statewide voter database, we are talking about the historical data on file for every current and past voter in Wisconsin, both active and active, even though only active voters are capable of casting ballots during Wisconsin elections. When people request all the voter data and vote statewide voter database, they're going to receive all Wisconsin voter data, which again includes both inactive and active records and the electoral history for each of those voter records. Again, going back well before the WBC, the GAB and even before the creation of any state maintained voter registration system. Electoral history in this instance refers to the data that documents all the details pertaining to a voter's past election participation. Did they vote? Did they tell us about it at the polls or prior to Election Day? If they voted early, how and when was there absentee ballot requested and when was it issued? When was it returned? If it was rejected, why couldn't it be processed? And if the ballot was returned to our office by the post office as undeliverable, did our staff have the time and information on hand to help that voter obtain a replacement ballot? I could go on and on, but I won't. So let's focus on what we mean when we say poll books. The poll book term refers to the comprehensive official record of every registered voter at a specific polling location. While most often seen as a printed record, some are. Some jurisdictions are now utilizing an electronic version to both capture voter signatures before voters can cast a ballot. Again, the list of voters in a full book is a small subset of the statewide database, because totals only include the names of people who are registered to vote at a single polling place. Another term voter. Low voter rolls isn't an official election term that we use here in Wisconsin. However, it may be another way to collectively refer to the names of active registered voters for a given election. When a person mentions that a voter has been removed from the voter rolls, they usually mean that the voter record has been inactivated and that the voter is no longer eligible to vote. In Wisconsin, every inactivated record and its voter history remains in the system to provide a historical record.

[00:10:32] **Speaker 1** So next, this slide provides a brief overview of Wisconsin's voter registration systems. The important thing to note here is that no statewide voter registration system existed in Wisconsin prior to 2006. Before 2000, six, towns with fewer than 5000 people weren't required to have any voter registration system. Cities and towns with more than 5000 people maintain their own separate system, sometimes referred to as a legacy system. Data from those separate systems was transferred to the first iteration of our statewide system, and that was replaced by our current system in 2006 or 2016. I'm sorry. One consequence of voter records from old municipal registration systems being uploaded into this vote is that the voter registration number assigned to the voter may appear different than the ones originally assigned in our wistful system. Some voter registration numbers that originated in local registration systems may appear as odd groupings of numbers and letters in that historical record. Having a strange looking voter registration number doesn't compromise the integrity of the voters records. Voter registration numbers are not a requirement for voting in Wisconsin. Plus, election officials can differentiate between voters without even needing to refer to a voter registration number. Clerks can instead refer to personally identifiable information such as date of birth or driver's license numbers in order to identify things like duplicates or to identify things like errors in the system. To reiterate with scope, the statewide database contains Wisconsin's entire electronic voter history. As time goes on, the database continues to grow as new voters are added to the database, just like any other government database would continue to grow with both historical and active records over time.

[00:12:44] **Speaker 2** Building out this sorry building. At this point, it's important to talk about the two types of water records that are stored within our voter registration system or voter statewide database, active voter records and inactive voter records, all of which lists similar voter registration information. Let's start with the active voter records. Active voter records are also known as eligible voter records because they allow for a voter to cast a ballot. And voters with. Active or eligible voter records. Yeah. And voters with active or eligible voter records have met the voter eligibility requirements. And they will be listed in your poll books, at your polling places in the districts where the voters live. Voters with an active or an eligible voter records, on the other hand, are not registered to vote, and they will not be listed in an election. So voters with inactive voter records will need to reregister at the site if they want to vote on Election Day. As the name implies, an eligible voter records voters with ineligible records do not meet Wisconsin's voter voting requirements. Why do we retain inactive or ineligible voter records? First and foremost, Wisconsin law requires the retention of public records is essential to the maintenance of an open and transparent government. Because Wisconsin law does not reference the destruction of voter records, they must be retained. An important reason we retain an eligible voter records is to safeguard against fraud. The retention of voter history does not make it any easier to commit election fraud, and it is no more difficult or easy to change a voter record than it is to create a new one from scratch. Instead, the retention of historical data helps to safeguard against abuse of the system. If an eligible records were destroyed, the state of Wisconsin would have no voting history. There would be no registration history, no conservation history, and more importantly, no history of why a record was marked as ineligible. The voter registration database is the means for election officials to track any reason for ineligibility, be a deaths, felony convictions, individuals who have been adjudicated incompetent to vote, etc.. When a voter whose voter record has been deactivated wishes to vote, they must be registered. And that process will create a new registration record. There are currently around 3.5 million active registered voters in our system. Of course, the number of active registered voters changes daily as the new voters register and as other active voters are deactivated for various reasons. For reference, the 2020 Census estimated that there are approximately 4.5 million adults living in Wisconsin, while the number of active registered voters typically increases just before major elections. As voters prepare for the election, the number also typically decreases after those major elections. There are 12 similarly 3.6 million inactive voters in Wisconsin. And again, this number keeps growing as time passes. Because we don't delete and eligible voter records, we simply inactivate the.

[00:16:12] **Speaker 1** Thanks. I now want to move to a topic that is central to the roles of local clerks and the elections commission, and one that is critical to discussions about the integrity of our elections, and that is how we maintain accurate voter data. What does accurate voter data mean? To answer that question, we need to explain what inaccurate voter data is. Voter registration data can become inaccurate for countless reasons, but the main ones fall into a couple of camps. One of those is when a voter moves to vote, Wisconsin citizens must be registered at their place of residence. So every time that someone moves, they're going to need to reregister. Another reason would be if a voter has died. The voter record would then need to be deactivated. Deactivation would also happen if a person is convicted of a felony sentence and is still serving a portion of that sentence. For a brief moment in time, whenever a registered Wisconsin voter moves and registers at a new location, they're going to have to voter registration records or what we call a duplicate record. This is an example of yet another way in which records need to be cleaned up. The old record will need to be deactivated, enfolded into the new one to maintain an accurate, complete history of that voter. That's also something that's completed by your local municipal clerk. Additionally, a voter, when filling out their voter registration form, they might make a mistake on the form, such as misspelling their name or address or any of the other information on the form. This represents yet another kind of error that election officials at the local level are tasked with cleaning up to fix these discrepancies in voter records that I just described. Local election officials have a number of processes and a number of partnerships with other state agencies who have data that we can cross-reference against our own voter data to help keep it accurate. Those partner agencies include the Department of Corrections, which keeps data on people currently serving a felony sentence in Wisconsin's correctional system. The Department of Health Services, which keeps Wisconsin's death records, and the Department of Transportation, which stores information kept on Wisconsin's driver license, which we use to compare to our own voter records. A major non-agency partner in our work to maintain accurate voter data is the Electronic Registration Information Center, or Eric, of which Wisconsin is required by law to be a member. In short, Eric is a consortium of 31 states that have come together to share and compare voter data and in return have an easy and cost effective way to improve the accuracy of each Member States voter data. Eric also increases access to voter registration for eligible citizens. Without this data consortium, there would likely be no feasible way for states to compare voter data across states and across databases because they would instead have to rely on dozens of bilateral agreements between sets of individual states. So without something like Eric, voter records across the country would be a lot less accurate. Each member state provides data about its voter lists to Eric, which in turn produces data reports that help each member state improve the accuracy of its voter lists. So, for example, every month Wisconsin submits to Eric its entire statewide voter registration list, along with motor vehicle license data. In return, Wisconsin receives reports that indicate voters who have moved within the state. Voters who have moved out of state. Voters who have died. Voters who who appear to have multiple registrations in their name within the state, as well as individuals who appear eligible to vote but aren't yet registered. Wisconsin has its own processes in addition to these to identify inaccurate data. In those cases, some of the data Eric provides is simply a supplement or a double check. But in others, the Eric data helps us to identify discrepancy that our own processes may miss, such as a name change due to marriage, or of course, that out-of-state data which we wouldn't otherwise have access to withstand. Wisconsin carries out a couple processes to clean up voter data and encourage voter registration based upon Eric reports. The first is the commission's quarterly movers mailings, which are sent out every few months to voters who Eric has identified as likely having moved. They do this by comparing Wisconsin's database of registered voters. Her records from the Wisconsin DMV, the national change of address through the Postal Service, and records from other states to identify voters who may have moved. The purpose of the Eric Movers mailing is to get electors to reregister at their new address and of course to provide information to our local election jurisdictions so that they may choose to use their authority to deactivate the election that the electors record are based on reliable information. The other major Erick driven process to improve our voter data is our biannual, eligible but unregistered mailing. These postcards, which we actually sent out just last week, are sent to voters who appear eligible to vote but are not yet registered. This is a process that is required as part of our Erik Membership Agreement. The mailing provides a person with available options to be able to register to vote. It does not provide them with a registration form.

[00:22:16] **Speaker 2** Camilla beyond. Erik Wisconsin has its own processes to ensure that voter data is kept accurate. Four of these are what we call registration. This works. One of those is our DMV checks every time a clerk enters or creates a new voter record. The system compares the voter supplied data such as name, date of birth and driver's license number with the voter's information on file at the Division of Motor Vehicles. With the alerts, the clerk if there's any data that doesn't match up similarly with the system. The visible system uses data from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services to alert clerks if a voter has died. Whistler also uses information from the Wisconsin Department of Correction to alert the clerk if a voter is serving a felony sentence. And the database also alerts the clerk if there is more than one voter record tied to a single voter so that the records can be merged by the clerk, which then allows for the voter's complete electoral history to be contained in a single voter record. In addition, the Wisconsin Elections Commission also sends out a mailing to voters every two years after November elections to voters who haven't voted in in the past four years. The letters offer voters an opportunity to keep their voter record active. But if the voters don't respond. The Clarks are. Responsible for deactivating their records. Which means that they, the voters, will no longer be registered to vote when they show up at their polls to vote and they will be required to reregister. Their data has helped Wisconsin a great deal. Are cleaning up this voter data. For example, Eric has helped the state identify about 921,000 Wisconsin voters who have potentially moved 2 million eligible yet unregistered voters, over a thousand voters who have died out of state and about a 1200 voter duplicate voter records. Of course, that's in addition to Wisconsin's own processes for cleaning up our voter data. The Badger website, the Badger Voters website, which is the Wisconsin Election Commission's hub for all things related to election data, may be helpful for the public and media organizations alike. This is where anyone can request and purchase voter data. Requests may be submitted for a single voter record or for the entire statewide voter database. While personally identifiable, identifiable information is redacted for privacy. This data hub can be a strong tool for journalists seeking more information on the makeup of Wisconsin's voter base. Thank you for tuning in to our presentation. I will now hand it off to Riley to take any questions you may have.

[00:25:18] **Speaker 3** Thanks everyone for that presentation. Thank you all members of the media for joining. I will now had the question. Stop sharing this PowerPoint here and need to view the participants. If you could raise your hand those who want to ask a question, I can then have you promoted to speaker view. So it looks like Fox 11 is raising their hand. Jacob, could you promote that person and then they can ask the question.

[00:25:49] **Speaker 1** Hi there. My name is Lexi.

[00:25:50] **Speaker 2** Shrader, a reporter with Fox 11.

[00:25:52] **Speaker 1** How are you guys doing?

[00:25:54] **Speaker 2** Well, thanks. So I kind of just want to ask the question. So, I mean, if a person does get booted off the voting list or whatever, what does a person have to do to reregister? So they're back on that if they haven't voted in a vote for years or whatever.

[00:26:08] **Speaker 1** That's an excellent question. So there are a lot of different ways that somebody can get registered to vote. So let's say you were deactivated because you hadn't participated in four years. Let's say your name, change your address, change. You were a felon and you've now been completed your sentence and you're no longer on that status. You can get reregistered to vote either on Election Day at your polling place. So we always have Election Day registration allowable under our law so you can get registered to vote there. Just make sure if you are registering to vote at the polls on Election Day, that you're bringing a proof of residence document with you. So this can be something like a utility bill, correspondence from a unit of government, a bank statement that's going to have your name in the address that you're registering on it. You're going to have to show that to the election official. You can also register to vote in person in your municipal clerk's office, and that's something that's available based on ours in your jurisdiction. So if you live in a township, you might have some more limited hours, but you can go on to the my vote that y that govee website and you can look up the contact information for your city, town or village clerk and you can find out when you can come to their office to get registered to vote. And you can also register to vote by mail. If you do so more than 20 days before the election, you want to get registered for it, and when you register to vote by mail, you can either fill out the the paper form, you can fill out the form that's on our website, or we even have a fill bill form through the my vote site. And you're going to mail that in to your clerk along with that proof of residence document. Make sure it goes to your clerk if you're going to register to vote by mail. And again, my vote or giving us a call is the best way to find their information. And the final option is also one that's only available more than 20 days before an election. And that is if you have a current Wisconsin DMV product. So let's say you have a current Wisconsin driver's license or a Wisconsin state ID card where you've got your address up to date with the DMV. Your your name is accurate. With the DMV, you're going to be able to register to vote online. And you do that by going to my vote that w y that job. And you can either register to vote as a new registrant there, or if you need to change your name or change your address, you can do that there too. But again, all the information has to match between what you enter and what's on file with the Wisconsin DMV. And if everything matches, then you'll be able to register to vote online without having to submit anything further to your clerk. But if there are any problems with any of that information matching, you're either going to have to work with DMV to get your record updated or you're going to have to register through one of those other methods where you provide proof of residence. Anything else to add?

[00:29:00] **Speaker 2** Miller Yeah, I was going to add that if we are in the late registration period, which is a 20 days prior to any election, you can actually pop into your clerk's office when they're available and that varies by municipality. So check with vote for the the times of operation, I believe they list them and you can register there. And then if you're in also the early voting period, you can vote at that same time. Otherwise they will issue you a certificate of registration which you take with you to the polls on Election Day to bypass the registration process on that day. Thank you.

[00:29:42] **Speaker 3** Great. Thank you for that question. Does anyone else have a question? I'm not seeing any hands up right now. So if you do have a question, please do raise your hand. Looks like we have a question from Matt Smith, if you could. Go ahead. Hi, Megan. How can you hear me?

[00:29:57] **Speaker 1** Hi. Yes, we can hear you.

[00:29:59] **Speaker 4** As you talked a lot about voter rolls and there's been a lot of talk about voter rolls and a lot of talk about the commission itself. Looking ahead to August and the fall, broadly speaking, why should voters have confidence in the commission and the work the commission does as they head to the polls?

[00:30:18] **Speaker 1** Well, thanks for that question. And I think that, you know, it's really important for voters to know how elections are run here in the state of Wisconsin. And we have the most decentralized election system in the country. So most other states elections are administered. And when I say administered, I mean who's registering voters? Who's issuing absentee ballots, who's training and recruiting poll workers, who's checking photo IDs and making sure that the poll books are signed? And that's not us at the state. That's local election officials. And that's why I think it's so important to have these opportunities to talk with Camila and other locals at these types of events, because they're the ones that are registering voters in their communities. They're the ones that are issuing absentees and making sure that only one ballot is ever going to be counted for each individual voter, that they can't participate more than once. And so those are processes that are carried out by your neighbors, your friends, your local election officials in your communities. And so, you know, I really encourage people to get involved, not just with how elections work at the state level, where mostly our responsibilities are to put out some of the more higher level guidance that comes from our bipartisan commission. And to administer some of this technology that is used by our local election officials to administer elections in your communities. And, you know, I hope that people have tremendous faith, as they should, in their local election officials. And if they have any questions about the process of how elections are administered in their local communities, to get involved, to get engaged, you know, as I always say, there are no dark corners, there are no locked doors in elections. You can watch every step of the process. So get engaged in your communities and ask your fantastic clerks in your communities about how elections are run there and how you can get involved. Kamila Anything to add?

[00:32:13] **Speaker 2** Yeah, I was just going to mention the same thing. If you're truly interested, you can apply to be an election inspector or if you are simply interested in the activities that happen at your poll site, you can just show up at your poll site and be an observer as well.

[00:32:32] **Speaker 3** Okay. Thanks for that question. And then we will go to Jason next. Jason, you're on. I think you're on mute now.

[00:32:41] **Speaker 5** Good morning. Thanks for taking my question. I would like to see, you know, what's going on as far as how many are you getting? Lots of phone calls, lots of questions about the Supreme Court ruling. And what are you telling the clerks about potentially if people can mail absentee ballots for another person and kind of what happens with people that have disabilities and how their ballots should be handled? What kind of advice are you giving to the clerks and how many questions are you getting? Are you getting flooded right now with questions?

[00:33:07] **Speaker 1** Well, you know, I wouldn't say that we're getting flooded. Know we're always going to be a small agency that is outnumbered by our local elected officials. So, you know, we have less than 40 full time staff at the elections commission and we've got 850 municipal clerks and 72 county clerks and then all of their staff. So, you know, it's always busy here with answering questions about some of the mechanics of elections. But I would say, as I did in the commission meeting the other day, that the most popular question that we've been getting in the last year has been as it relates to the targeted litigation and drop boxes. And so we're not able to offer any sort of definitive yes or no on a lot of these questions. But our clerks have been operating under the circuit court's ruling for multiple elections now. So since February, the clerks have been operating under that decision. And so I think many of them have worked with their local council, worked with some of their larger organizations to decide how that is being implemented and adhered to within their local communities. So we don't have any additional guidance that we're able to offer after the Commission's meeting on Tuesday. But I think that our clerks have been able to navigate this now since the spring elections, and I trust that they'll continue to do so.

[00:34:33] **Speaker 3** Thanks for that question. And now we'll go to A.J.. Hello. One question I had for clarification. So inactive voters do not appear on the poll books, but they do show up on the entire list of registrations that third parties are able to purchase. What would happen if one of these groups that then use that information to mail out absentee ballot applications, are they able to send those to somebody who has been inactive for some time? And if so, what would happen if somebody received an absentee ballot application for somebody who used to live at that address and attempted to acquire an absentee ballot on behalf of that person who may no longer live in the state?

[00:35:24] **Speaker 1** That is an excellent question and I've got a lot to cover there. So remind me if I miss anything. So you're exactly right that the voter rolls, as people refer to it, as are the pullback is only going to have active registered voters. But a database has history. It has all sorts of information. And the only time that somebody is going to get inactive voter records is if they ask for it. Right. So if they go to Badger voters and they say, I'd like to purchase both active and inactive records, and this is what I'd like to see, well, then that's what they're going to get, because that's what they asked for. But that's the only time that those records ever appear together, right? Because they're not available to clerks to issue a ballot in the system. They're not available to clerks to be able to, you know, print on the poll books in the system. But they're kept as a historical record. So only active records are available to be printed on poll books, available for a clerk to be able to issue an absentee ballot. And I think you really touch on the importance, though, of us having that historical record. So let's say somebody did buy those inactive records and they wanted to send out a mailing to everybody, both active and inactive. So that's going to include people that are deceased or whatever it might be. Well, if somebody did attempt to send back a voter absentee ballot request form on the behalf of somebody that is deceased, when a clerk goes in to process that absentee ballot request, the system's going to say to them, Ah, this person's deceased. You can't you can't issue an absentee ballot. And not only is that going to prevent them from issuing that ballot, it's also going to be a red flag to say somebody is trying to do something nefarious here. And then they would work with their local district attorney to figure out why somebody attempted to make that fraudulent request. And I'm sure Camilla has more to add to that, too, from her perspective, because she's really you know, her and other clerks are really the ones that are implementing those safeguards.

[00:37:30] **Speaker 2** But there are actually quite a few organizations out there that are doing their part to help increase voter registration. And I don't know where they get their mailing lists. It's not us, but they're issuing letters to our residents who are currently registered. So those registered voters call us and they aren't happy with us, thinking that we are the ones that issued this an error and that we don't know what we're doing. So we have to sit and, you know, calm them down, tell them that everything that we have in the system reflects what they believe to be true as being their current voter registration record and that there's no further action required on their part. And in the end it works out. But we take a lot of calls from people who are upset because they're getting correspondence, encouraging them to vote. And maybe the people that are using that are sending these out might even have mailing lists that include previous home addresses, previous names. It's just various things that are out of date. So it does make it difficult for us to dial dial their tension down a bit before they're able to go into all their friends to disregard those notices when they see them.

[00:38:53] **Speaker 3** And just real quick, what about a case and Meghan, I know you touched on a case where with the cross-checking with DHS, that somebody's dead and there's a death record that quickly gets flagged if someone's trying to get an absentee ballot on behalf of a deceased voter, what if it's somebody who moved two years ago, know, say, I just bought a house in a new community and I attempt to acquire an absentee ballot that this application was sent for, for the people who previously lived in that home. And they may still be alive. They may still live in Wisconsin or they live in another state.

[00:39:23] **Speaker 1** Yeah, that's a good one, too. I mean, these are all great examples of why we have to keep that history. So let's say you've moved and you've got a new registration at a new address and you've got your old record and that's deactivated, right? But somebody used bad or old data and sends a request for you to your old address. And now they've filled it out nefariously and they've sent it back. The system is going to show that your registration at that address is not active. Right. So you will not be eligible to receive a ballot at that address. And if the if if let's say somebody was trying to register again, they're also going to see, you know, all of that history. So they're going to see that you're registered now at your current address and that that was your old address. And so I think that's a real benefit, too, of our locally administered system, because in a lot of cases, Leclerc is going to know or is going to see that, and they'll also be able to follow up on that information. But I think it's really important that we have that historical record so that if there is something that does go wrong, if somebody does do something that they shouldn't, that we have everything we need to be able to follow up on it, to catch it in most instances, or to be able to refer it to law enforcement if somebody does commit an unlawful act.

[00:40:43] **Speaker 3** Thank you. It looks like we have another follow up question from Jason.

[00:40:53] **Speaker 5** Thank you. Yes. So we have some contentious primaries for both parties in August. Can you remind us what the open primary process looks like here? And if I pull a Democratic or Republican ballot, is that open to public records disclosures and like it is in some states?

[00:41:12] **Speaker 1** Very good question. So, yes, August 9th is our statewide primary, and we do have an open primary system here in the state of Wisconsin. And so what that means is, like Camilla talked about, you don't register as a party. You can choose either parties contests to vote in during an open primary. And so some ballots are what we call consolidated ballots. And what that means is you're going to have all the parties on one ballot, but you can't cross over. Right. So at the top, you can mark your party's preference and then you can only vote in contests in that party. If you crossed over and voted for candidates in multiple parties, then you're going to have what's called an overvote in your votes in those contests where you've over voted will not be counted. And in terms of can somebody trace back how you voted, what ballot you voted for? And the answer is no, absolutely not. So those ballots are all kept confidential in secret. There is nothing that ties your ballot back to you so somebody won't be able to go back in and determine how you voted or which party's ballot you chose to vote. Camilla Anything to add? Because you really are the ones that administer this process.

[00:42:34] **Speaker 2** Veering into question. I had some ideas that are escaping me. So you're asking specifically, Jason?

[00:42:42] **Speaker 5** Yeah, I was just asked. I was asking to kind of describe the open primary process. And then secondly, if if like some states, it's very transparent. If you pull a ballot, Democrat or Republican, you can open records, requests and find out which party somebody voted in. So in our state, it sounds like Meghan says we nobody can open records request to find out what what ballot you pulled if it was Democratic or Republican ballot. And also, I guess if you can clarify this whole idea that that some ballots actually have both parties and you have to kind of distinguish that. So you're not you're not crossing over and voting for the Senate candidates on the Democratic side and Republican candidates on the for the governor race.

[00:43:20] **Speaker 2** Yep. Yeah. We've been getting a lot of calls about the ballot for for August because. People want to vote for a certain sheriff, but he's listed as a Republican candidate and they want to vote the Democratic Party. And I'm telling them that if they want to vote for their friend, they can't vote in both parties. They have to choose a party or actually they don't technically have to choose a party, but they can't vote in more than one party's contests. Because that would inactivate or invalidate their votes due to crossover votes. But every ballot that we issued, like Morgan says, lists candidates for all the parties and then also for each of the contests within those parties. So.

[00:44:10] **Speaker 1** Yeah, so like, I think is it fair to say, you know, on a consolidated ballot, which is what most communities use, they're going to have at the top of the ballot, it's going to say, what's your party preference? And basically that's another indicator for both the voting equipment and for the election official to say if you've got questions about the voters and tense here and what they meant to vote in. So let's say there was an errant mark that kind of crossed over into a different party. They'd use that information to determine what primary you meant to vote in. Right. And so let's say in that section you chose that you wanted to vote in Republican contests. Then when you get down to the ballot, you're going to see that there's all of the the governors, the AG, all of the contests that are available to you for the Democratic Party. You wouldn't vote in any of those, right? You would move on to the part where it says for the Republican Party and then you would make your selections within that one. But you couldn't make any selections within the independent section on the ballots or within the Democratic section on the ballot. But there is that section at the top that does allow you to make that distinction about what party you intend to vote in. And again, not traced back to you, but what one you intend to vote in. So if there ever were a question or if you accidentally did cross over that the voting equipment in the election official would know how you intended, how you intended to vote and what what primary.

[00:45:38] **Speaker 2** I should also mention that choosing a political party doesn't automatically fill in bubbles for you. Even if there's just one candidate for a party, you're not going to. That person's not going to get a vote unless you fill in their bubble. Yep.

[00:45:52] **Speaker 1** Did you have a follow up, Jason? I know.

[00:45:54] **Speaker 5** It's just it's just it's yeah, it just seems like the consolidated ballot could get pretty messy if people are kind of. I mean, I guess it's really important to drive home this point that, you know, be aware you can only vote for one party on these things.

[00:46:06] **Speaker 1** Yeah, and I think that's exactly right. Every every time, you know, there's certainly benefits to the open primary in that you don't have to designate a party that you can choose on that day how you want to participate. And that's not subject to public record. But there is always confusing questions, and a lot of clerks do give additional instructions with the absentees. And then if you vote in person at the polls, there are even further checks. You know, if you try to put your ballot into the electronic voting equipment and you have over voted, you're going to get a message that tells you that. And then the election official would be able to spoil that ballot and issue a new one to you if if you've made a mistake.

[00:46:45] **Speaker 2** Also, every voter is allowed up to three ballots. So if they do make a mistake or aren't sure if they made a mistake, they can come in. If they voted via absentee ballot, we can pool and inactivate their previously submitted ballot and we can issue another one, a replacement ballot.

[00:47:04] **Speaker 3** Thanks for that question. And it looks like we've got a follow up from FOX 11.

[00:47:12] **Speaker 1** Yeah. So I just.

[00:47:13] **Speaker 2** Kind of have I know I saw this in the past articles and stuff, but you guys have an estimate of how many voters.

[00:47:18] **Speaker 1** Will be removed for this.

[00:47:19] **Speaker 2** Election. I like.

[00:47:24] **Speaker 1** So are you talking about, like, list maintenance? Yeah. Yeah. So there aren't really any current list maintenance processes that happen right now. Most of that happens after a general election. So under the statute, it's called four year list maintenance, but it happens every two years. After general election, we look at who participated. And if somebody hasn't participated in four years, they're deactivated. So that has already occurred and that doesn't happen again before the November elections. But what does happen is leading up to an election, clerks are getting information every day about people that are deceased or are now felons or incompetent. And they're looking at that information and deactivating it on a case by case basis under their authority. And so that is the type of thing that's happening now. But there are no statewide statutory processes between now and November where the state would be deactivating large amounts of people. And kind of just one more going back to.

[00:48:25] **Speaker 2** The Supreme Court decision with ballot drop boxes and everything. Do you think it's going to turn people off now that that's happening or maybe it bring.

[00:48:33] **Speaker 1** Out more.

[00:48:33] **Speaker 2** Voters? What's your opinion on that?

[00:48:36] **Speaker 1** We'll see. You know, I don't know that I really have an opinion other than that, you know, there are options for voters. I mean, anybody can choose if they would like to vote a ballot by absentee ballot and they'd like to get that by mail, and they can choose how they'd like to return that. So if they want to bring it back to their clerk, if they want to put it in the mail, they have those options. They also have the option to vote in person absentee in the two weeks before an election. And then, of course, Election Day is always a really popular option here in the state of Wisconsin as well. So I guess it'll be to be seen what type of impact, if any, this has on the fall elections.

[00:49:15] **Speaker 3** Thank you. Thanks. And then it looks like we have a question from Victor how Kobo Jacob, could you promote him?

[00:49:28] **Speaker 5** Hi there. Can you hear me?

[00:49:29] **Speaker 1** You can.

[00:49:30] **Speaker 5** Hey, just checking. I know in previous elections, we've talked about some statewide needs in terms of poll workers and kind of a call for people to help. I'm just wondering if obviously the primary is a lower participation contest prior to the general in November. But just wondering if you're hearing any needs from clerks wide for whether that's poll workers or other staffing needs or equipment, things like that? Just thinking about that.

[00:50:04] **Speaker 1** Yeah. We have not had any major needs expressed to us for this election cycle. But I think it's still a little early for November. But as it pertains to August, we have not heard of any, you know, poll worker shortages, those types of things. But we'll continue to monitor that situation. So one of the things that we're hearing nationwide, I don't think real specific to Wisconsin, is just really needing to think ahead about paper supply and how there are, you know, paper supply shortages all around the country, just like there are sort of some shortages and supply chain issues with things like computers and technology. We're also seeing that with paper supply. So that's something that will keep working with the local clerks on to ensure that they have the ballots, the envelopes, all of those paper materials that they need to be able to administer the November election. Camilla, do you have anything to add to that?

[00:51:05] **Speaker 2** No, I don't think.

[00:51:09] **Speaker 3** Thank you for that question. And then it looks like you have a follow up question, or at least your hand is still raised. Well, I accidentally did leave it raised, but I guess to build off of Jason's first question is to really drive this point home, because this is something that we have heard from a number of viewers emailing us. Bottom line, what's the message? If somebody is asking, can I mail my spouses or somebody for whom I'm a caretaker, can't I put their absentee ballot in the mail?

[00:51:41] **Speaker 1** Well, the first thing I would say is to to talk with their local election official about the, you know, the options for returning a ballot within your community. But I think as of right now, it is the voter is the one who is required to mail their ballot. But again, I would check with your local election official as they are the ones in their communities that are responsible for administering that process and for providing their voters with information about how ballots can be returned within their community.

[00:52:13] **Speaker 3** Are you worried that will cause problems, that that could confuse people? I know the Council for Disability Rights, Wisconsin says they're reading of the ruling, says that people can still mail a ballot on behalf of somebody else because the court's decision not to weigh in on that specific question keeps the status quo in place where there have been no challenges of being able to put somebody else's ballot in the mailbox. So are you worried at all that, especially with this primary election less than a month away now, that people are going to be confused over whether they're potentially breaking the law by doing something they've done for a long time?

[00:52:47] **Speaker 1** You know, there's certainly always there's confusion whenever there is a change that happens right before an election or in this instance in the middle of an active election cycle. So I yes, I think confusion is certainly a concern for all of us. But I also don't think it would be appropriate for me to opine beyond anything that's in the court's ruling.

[00:53:13] **Speaker 3** Thank you. And thank you, A.J. Last call for questions. I don't see anyone else's hand up. So if you do have a question, please do raise your hand and we can get to it. I'll give you a few moments here. Okay. Well, I'm not seeing any. So I would like to thank everyone for tuning in today to the media availability. Thank you again to Megan and Camilla for joining us on this media availability. And we hope to do another one of these toward the end of this month and then probably at least one or two in August as well. So do look forward to those. Thanks, everybody.

[00:54:00] **Speaker 1** Thanks, everyone. Appreciate you being here.