

The Inside Scoop

An Inside Look at National,
State and Local Politics

April 3, 2005 Vol. 1 #17



Don't to Forget to Vote April 5th!!

Inside the Scoop: Reaction to Jim Doyle's Election Reform Proposal, Vote Underheim April 5th, President Bush on the Death of John Paul II, Key Group Endorses Voter Photo ID, Calvin Coolidge



Mark Green Reacts to Governor Doyle's Election Reform Plan of April 1

Congressman Mark Green's statement from
Friday, April 1, 2005

"Whether it was yet another political calculus or honest concern, I am glad Jim Doyle has finally joined the rest of us in admitting that Wisconsin's election system is broken. I'm not sure what took him so long, because there is nothing more important to our democratic system than a fair election with accurate results.

"According to initial reports, Governor Doyle's package does include some needed reforms. In fact, some of his proposals match closely with my VOTE Act legislation that I announced over a month ago (see Green interview from The Inside Scoop # 15 for an in depth explanation of his proposal). Additional training for poll workers, reforming registration drive procedures and stopping felons from voting are problems we all can agree are in need of immediate attention.

"However the governor forgot the most important part of the election reform agenda he is now decided to embrace. There is simply no better way to ensure the integrity of our elections than by asking someone to show their photo ID before they cast a

ballot. Wisconsin makes it easier than any other state in the country to vote, a photo identification requirement doesn't harm that tradition one bit.

"At his news conference this morning Governor Doyle should announce to everyone that his election reform package is not an April Fools' joke, and he will support a photo ID requirement for voting."



Speaker Gard: "Doyle Says to Illegal Voters Vote Early and Vote Often"

Wisconsin deserves better than old school Chicago-style politics, but that's what the state may see if Governor Doyle's voter fraud scheme is enacted according to Assembly Speaker John Gard. Despite daily stories in the media of massive illegal voting in Wisconsin, Governor Doyle offered a plan that does not include Photo ID and expands early voting which will allow more illegal voting in more places. "It's a loophole big enough to drive buses from Chicago through," said Gard, "We need to limit the opportunity for illegal voting, not expand it. Governor Doyle just doesn't seem to get it. The people of this state overwhelmingly want Photo ID."

Several Wisconsin media outlets have exposed massive voting problems from the November

(Speaker Gard continued from page 1)

elections throughout the state including hundreds of votes from convicted felons, uncounted ballots, voters claiming to live in vacant lots and more votes recorded than registered voters.

Governor Doyle’s reform plan does nothing to protect the vote of people who follow the law, but does protect those who break the law.

“Early voting is often used to commit voter fraud. People can vote over and over again at multiple places and without Photo ID, they can’t be stopped.” Gard said, “Governor Doyle is throwing the door wide open to the point where there will be more illegal voters than there are people on the Packer’s season ticket waiting list.”

Gard says he is encouraged that Governor Doyle is realizing he has to do something to protect the rights of legal voters, but says Doyle’s plan won’t fix anything.

“First he and the Democrats told us there wasn’t a problem,” Gard said, “I’m glad he’s finally admitting that something has to be done, but unfortunately his plan will only make things worse.”

Gard said even though the Governor left out the Photo ID bill in his voter fraud package, the Governor will get a chance to fix that. The State Senate is expected to send the Governor the Photo ID bill next week.



Walker Weighs in on Jim Doyle’s Election Reform Plan

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker’s statement from Friday, April 1, 2005

“Jim Doyle’s plan does not prevent fraud, it invites it. Without a photo ID requirement, early voting just provides more time for fraud.

“Besides, Wisconsin already has “early voting” it’s the current absentee ballot process - and it doesn’t work. On the last weekend before the November 2, 2004 election, some 15,000 to 20,000 voter registration forms were still not processed by City of Milwaukee staff. Similar problems were reported in other parts of the state.

“This is in no small part due to the fact that municipal clerk and election commission staff were overwhelmed in the fall election in two areas:

1. The number of people seeking to vote early through the absentee ballot process; and
2. The number of registration cards coming into their offices at the last minute from the massive voter registration drives.

“Instead of preparing for Election Day, many of the elections staff were responding to absentee ballot voters - processing voter registration cards right up to the eve of the election.

“Wisconsin should go back to the pre-1998 system where absentee ballot voters have to show a reason for not being able to make it to the polls on Election Day. Most importantly, Wisconsin should require a photo ID requirement for every voter to insure the integrity of each and every vote.”



Capone Endorses Doyle’s Plan

by Rick Sense

Political scientist and deceased mobster, Al Capone, issued a statement today in support of Governor Jim Doyle’s election reform proposal. “I am excited that the Governor of Wisconsin still believes that people should still be provided the right-to-vote without the burden of having to prove to a poll worker they are who they say they are with a photo ID. When me and my pals head to the polls, it is just so inconvenient to have to mess with bringing a photo ID.”

Capone also mentioned that photo ID would truly limit voter participation on Election Day. “I know a couple of hundred of my closest “friends” would stay home if they had to show a photo ID to vote, and some might only choose to vote once or twice because of the added hassle.”



RPW Chair Rick Graber

Key Group Embraces Photo ID

by Chris Lato

In yet another sign of growing support for common sense election reform, the office of Senator Joe Leibham (R-Sheboygan) released a poll indicating 70% of Wisconsin municipal clerks surveyed support a photo ID requirement at the polls.

129 clerks responded to the survey, and 90 support photo ID at the polls. When coupled with a recent survey released in February by the Republican Party of Wisconsin (RPW) that shows 84.3% of likely voters support photo ID, the head of RPW said it is time for Governor James E. Doyle to stop ignoring the will of the people and take action in support of this common-sense election reform.

“Municipal clerks are the front-line leaders on election day. Their recommendations on protecting the integrity of elections should not be taken lightly,” RPW Chairman Rick Graber commented. “They understand our open election system offers an invitation to fraud. Their strong support of photo ID proves this measure must be enacted to prevent legal voters from being disenfranchised by misconduct.”

Newspapers in at least eight Wisconsin cities – including Eau Claire, Green Bay, and Janesville – have endorsed a photo ID requirement. In addition, Washington State’s Christine Gregoire and New Mexico’s Bill Richardson – two Democrat governors – have both recently called for photo ID requirements in their states.

“Governor Doyle and some Democrats need to move beyond partisanship and accept the fact that this is a reasonable way to close off one avenue of election fraud,” Graber stated. “Photo ID has never been touted as a cure-all, but Wisconsin voters and municipal clerks strongly agree photo ID would effectively help ensure future elections will not be stolen by fraud.”



President's Statement on the Death of Pope John Paul II

Laura and I join people across the Earth in mourning the passing of Pope John Paul II. The Catholic Church has lost its shepherd, the world has lost a champion of human freedom, and a good and faithful servant of God has been called home.

Pope John Paul II left the throne of St. Peter in the same way he ascended to it -- as a witness to the dignity of human life. In his native Poland, that witness launched a democratic revolution that swept Eastern Europe and changed the course of history. Throughout the West, John Paul's witness reminded us of our obligation to build a culture of life in which the strong protect the weak. And during the Pope's final years, his witness was made even more powerful by his daily courage in the face of illness and great suffering.

All Popes belong to the world, but Americans had special reason to love the man from Krakow. In his visits to our country, the Pope spoke of our "providential" Constitution, the self-evident truths about human dignity in our Declaration, and the "blessings of liberty" that follow from them. It is these truths, he said, that have led people all over the world to look to America with hope and respect.

Pope John Paul II was, himself, an inspiration to millions of Americans, and to so many more throughout the world. We will always remember the humble, wise and fearless priest who became one of history's great moral leaders. We're grateful to God for sending such a man, a son of Poland, who became the Bishop of Rome, and a hero for the ages.





**Vote Underheim April 5th for
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction
by Gregg Underheim**

Fiscal difficulty is brewing in Wisconsin. According to the non-partisan Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance the economy will grow but it is likely to grow at a less rapid pace than in the last quarter century. That is a function of an aging population and a slow growth of manufacturing in Wisconsin. Additionally, there will be greater demand for services in Wisconsin as the senior population expands. The Seniorcare drug program will grow as will the COP program and nursing home needs. Furthermore, we are a high tax state that cannot afford tax increases and remain competitive.

Every sector of the economy has been forced to control or cut costs and improve quality. Yet the only question we can ask in education is how do you raise taxes. That is no longer acceptable. When serious health care policy makers meet they talk about cost control. When corrections policy makers meet they look toward alternative sentencing to control costs. There is a committee in the Assembly created to work on Medicaid cost control. The University took a \$100 million dollar cut in the last budget. Local governments are seeking way to combine services and controls. Yet in K-12 education the only answer is more taxes. From 1992-1993 school year to 2002-2003 school year school spending went up over 55%. The rate of inflation was just over 26%. Education spending grew at more than twice the rate of inflation. There must be a conversation about cost and quality in education.

If we are to succeed in not pitting seniors and kids and schools and teachers and taxpayers against one another we must recognize these problems and offer meaningful solutions.

These are solutions that I offer and they are the planks of my campaign.

First, we must reform the way we buy health care for teachers. Putting them in the state pool will save 10's maybe 100's of millions of dollars.

Second, we must institute "W3", a What Works in Wisconsin program. That program would send representatives from the DPI to the high performing-low spending districts to see what those districts have in common. Those commonalities could then be exported to the rest of the state.

Third, we must keep the QEO and caps in place. The current Superintendent supports eliminating the QEO and retaining the caps. That is an unworkable and political proposal, not serious policy.

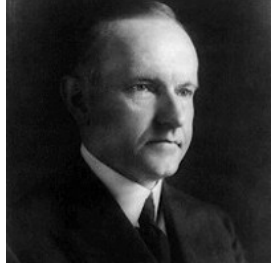
Fourth, we must use technology more effectively to produce higher quality and lower cost. The rest of the economy has done so over the last 25 years. It is time for education to catch up.

Fifth, we must become positive toward the choice options in Wisconsin. The DPI must support the elimination of the school choice caps in Milwaukee. It must support giving counties the right to charter schools.

Sixth, we must prepare students in math and science to meet the competition offered by the newly developing world. Currently our graduate programs in those subjects are filled with foreign students. They are filled with foreign students because our students lack either the interest or the ability to compete for those spots. When the economies of foreign countries become strong and filled with opportunity many of the foreign minds that are important to our economy currently may choose to go home. We will need powerfully educated people to take their place.

Wisconsin has been the home to many significant reforms over the last century. In this century we must lead the way in seeking to provide quality education at a reasonable cost. Our future depends on it.

(Gregg Underheim is a full-time legislator who was elected to the State Assembly in a June 1987 special election. He is a former high school English teacher, aide to U.S. Representative Thomas Petri and former small business owner.)



Famous Republican: Calvin Coolidge

At 2:30 on the morning of August 3, 1923, while visiting in Vermont, Calvin Coolidge received word that he was President. By the light of a kerosene lamp, his father, who was a notary public, administered the oath of office as Coolidge placed his hand on the family Bible.

Coolidge was "distinguished for character more than for heroic achievement," wrote a Democratic admirer, Alfred E. Smith. "His great task was to restore the dignity and prestige of the Presidency when it had reached the lowest ebb in our history ... in a time of extravagance and waste...."

Born in Plymouth, Vermont, on July 4, 1872, Coolidge was the son of a village storekeeper. He was graduated from Amherst College with honors, and entered law and politics in Northampton, Massachusetts. Slowly, methodically, he went up the political ladder from councilman in Northampton to Governor of Massachusetts, as a Republican. En route he became thoroughly conservative.

As President, Coolidge demonstrated his determination to preserve the old moral and economic precepts amid the material prosperity which many Americans were enjoying. He refused to use Federal economic power to check the growing boom or to ameliorate the depressed condition of agriculture and certain industries. His first message to Congress in December 1923 called for isolation in foreign policy, and for tax cuts, economy, and limited aid to farmers.

He rapidly became popular. In 1924, as the beneficiary of what was becoming known as "Coolidge prosperity," he polled more than 54

percent of the popular vote.

In his Inaugural he asserted that the country had achieved "a state of contentment seldom before seen," and pledged himself to maintain the status quo. In subsequent years he twice vetoed farm relief bills, and killed a plan to produce cheap Federal electric power on the Tennessee River.

The political genius of President Coolidge, Walter Lippmann pointed out in 1926, was his talent for effectively doing nothing: "This active inactivity suits the mood and certain of the needs of the country admirably. It suits all the business interests which want to be let alone.... And it suits all those who have become convinced that government in this country has become dangerously complicated and top-heavy...."

Coolidge was both the most negative and remote of Presidents, and the most accessible. He once explained to Bernard Baruch why he often sat silently through interviews: "Well, Baruch, many times I say only 'yes' or 'no' to people. Even that is too much. It winds them up for twenty minutes more."

But no President was kinder in permitting himself to be photographed in Indian war bonnets or cowboy dress, and in greeting a variety of delegations to the White House.

Both his dry Yankee wit and his frugality with words became legendary. His wife, Grace Goodhue Coolidge, recounted that a young woman sitting next to Coolidge at a dinner party confided to him she had bet she could get at least three words of conversation from him. Without looking at her he quietly retorted, "You lose." And in 1928, while vacationing in the Black Hills of South Dakota, he issued the most famous of his laconic statements, "I do not choose to run for President in 1928."

By the time the disaster of the Great Depression hit the country, Coolidge was in retirement. Before his death in January 1933, he confided to an old friend, ". . . I feel I no longer fit in with these times."

Source: www.whitehouse.gov