

Wisconsin County Clerks Association

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SB-644

Updating and modernizing county clerk duties, increasing accountability in local government

SB-644 **empowers county clerks to innovate** and deliver services in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Also, by having county clerks serve as independently elected election administrators in every county, the proposal standardizes and brings accountability to election operations.

- **Modernizing local government and empowering innovation:**

- Updates statutes to include the major duties of the office.
- Enables clerks to perform their jobs in 2014, not 1955. Updates include giving officials the flexibility to store official records in different formats, such as electronic format, which helps reduce cost.
- Increases transparency and public access to government by collecting and disseminating email addresses of all officials serving in tax districts.

- **Standardizing election duties statewide and increasing accountability:**

- Recognizes the county clerk as a focal point for election administration in the county, and creates the title of “Chief Election Officer of the County,” delineating duties associated with the title.
- Standardizes election administration statewide by making the independently elected Milwaukee County Clerk accountable for election operations while maintaining the Milwaukee County Board of Election Commissioners’ structure.
- Increases accountability by having an elected official supervising election duties, similar to every other clerk in the state.

- **Safeguard checks and balances within county government:**

- As independently elected officials, county clerks assure adequate checks and balances in his/her unit of local government. The clerk should oversee the clerical duties not only for the county board as a whole, but also for committees where fiscal and policymaking decisions are made but may not require action of the full county board.