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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin Department of Justice Working to Protect Fair Election *AG Kaul Issues Reminder: Voter Intimidation is Illegal*

MADISON, Wis. – Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul today shared how the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) is preparing for the upcoming election on November 3, 2020. The attorney general also issued a reminder that voter intimidation is against the law.

“The Wisconsin Department of Justice is working with other agencies to ensure that we have a fair election. It is critical that every lawfully cast ballot is counted and that voters feel safe at their polling locations,” said Attorney General Kaul. “Voter intimidation is illegal. If someone breaks the laws that protect against voter intimidation, they should be prepared to spend time behind bars.”

DOJ is ensuring the election is secure and that voters can vote safely.

DOJ’s Division of Criminal Investigation staffs the Wisconsin State Intelligence Center (WSIC). WSIC facilitates intelligence and information sharing with federal, state, local, tribal, and campus law enforcement partners along with fire service, emergency management, public health, military, and private sector agencies. WSIC is prepared to identify significant threats to Wisconsin elections, including but not limited to threats of election interference, foreign or domestic.

Prior to and on Election Day, DOJ will serve as a resource to the Wisconsin Election Commission, law enforcement, and district attorneys. DOJ will be communicating with law enforcement and prosecutors regarding relevant election laws.

Voter Intimidation

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Voter intimidation is a crime. Wisconsin law prohibits anyone from using or threatening force to compel someone to vote, to keep them from voting, or to influence their voting decision. Wisconsin law also prohibits anyone from using duress or fraud to impede or prevent someone from freely exercising their right to vote. The law not only prohibits individuals from taking any of these actions personally, but it also prohibits individuals from having a third party take these actions.

Voter intimidation can take many forms and determining if any action is voter intimidation is dependent on the facts of the incident. Examples of voter intimidation could include:

- Brandishing or displaying firearms in an intimidating or threatening manner in or near a polling place;
- Engaging in disorderly behavior in or near a polling place; or
- Preventing access to a polling place by making threats or engaging in intimidating behavior.

Additionally, it is illegal for private groups to conduct law enforcement or military activities under state and federal law.

What to do if you witness voter intimidation:

If you witness or are subject to voter intimidation, alert an election official and call local law enforcement immediately. If you are being threatened with violence, call 911.