

Letter to the Editor:

Wisconsin organization promotes fair elections

Wisconsin Business Leaders for Democracy (WBLD) is a Milwaukee-based non-partisan civic engagement organization that was formed to encourage and support employees to participate in voting and other related civic activities. As such, WBLD has much to offer to our area.

The organization's website states, "*We are dedicated to helping ensure equitable access to voting, non-partisan, transparent election policy and administration, and unbiased representation.*" The website provides various resources including a "tool kit" to facilitate businesses and other organizations in efforts toward achieving these aims.

Business leaders in WBLD participated in a recent roundtable that included Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson and Milwaukee Election Commissioner Claire Woodall. The CEOs described various actions they've already taken to facilitate voter engagement in their workforces. Examples of these actions include providing paid time off to vote, offering on-site voter registration, providing paid time off to work at polls, and paying the difference between poll-worker pay and the employees' typical daily pay.

To date, according to John Florsheim, president of Milwaukee's Weyco Group shoe company (which operated in Chippewa Falls as Weyenberg Brothers in the 1880s and '90s), there are currently no members of WBLD in our general Chippewa Valley. WBLD "*would be very interested in collaborating with other groups or individuals interested in supporting civic engagement and equitable access to voting.*"

In particular, WBLD would like to generate "*a list of Wisconsin Companies/Organizations that agree to actively promote voting and civic engagement so this type of pro-democracy activity becomes the norm. ... We would like to try to get as many companies as possible sending out information to their employees about the importance of voting and being an engaged citizen.*"

If this organization and its goals seem worth pursuing and joining, visit wibusinessfordemocracy.org.

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